

**March
2
1955**

PUNCH OFFICE 10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E. C. 4



UNA BENDICIÓN...

OLD MARÍA sits making her lace. As stitch follows stitch she gives thanks for the electricity that lights her work. "Electricity", says María, "is *una bendición para el hombre* — for the benefit of Man."

Up at Los Peares, in the Province of Galicia, work is proceeding on a new hydro-electric power station. It is generating electricity for the growing industries in the North of Spain.

The electrical plant is being supplied by The British Thomson-Houston Co. Ltd., one of the nine famous A.E.I. companies. The equipment includes three huge generators, transformers, switchgear and control gear, much of which is already running.

A.E.I. are Associated Electrical Industries whose Companies make everything electrical from a turbine to a torch bulb.

AEI

for progress through electricity

**Associated Electrical Industries
are a family of companies :**

The British Thomson-Houston Co. Ltd.
Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co. Ltd.
Birlec Ltd.
The Edison Swan Electric Co. Ltd.
Ferguson Pailin Ltd.
The Hotpoint Electric Appliance Co. Ltd.
International Refrigerator Co. Ltd.
Premier Electric Heaters Ltd.
Sunvic Controls Ltd.

Inside information...



One of the first things that men in the know get to know, is that Simpsons in Piccadilly have an excellent name for knitwear. You see why when you see this Italian jacket and heavy-knit pullover. They are made to make leisure an even greater pleasure: designed for luxury living indoors in the evening and at the weekends. The jacket has neat brass buttons, and is trimmed with two contrasting colours. In white trimmed red/navy, navy — red/yellow; navy — white/saxe; black — white/green; black — brick/green; yellow — grey/white. 9 gns. The pullover has a two-way collar, raglan sleeves, and is trimmed with contrasting neck, welt and cuffs. In black trimmed red, black/yellow, green/yellow, white/navy, navy/saxe. 9 gns. Order the easier way through the Simpson Post Order Service.

Simpson
PICCADILLY

Men's Knitwear — ground floor
Simpson (Piccadilly) Ltd, London W.1 Regent 2002

By Appointment Wine Merchants



to the late King George VI

The connoisseur favours

HARVEYS of Bristol

THE WINE MERCHANTS WITH OVER 150 YEARS' EXPERIENCE

*"Bright to the Last Drop"*

Their Sherries, Ports and Table Wines are all characterised by unfailing high quality. Harvey's Retail List, available for the asking, offers 450 varieties of Wines and Spirits and your selection can be guided by experts who visit the Wine growing countries every year.

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CLEVELAND

Builders of Bridges & Fabricators of all types of structural steelwork

The truth about savings

THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY

You put your money away where it will earn a fixed rate of interest and not fluctuate in value. What happens? As the cost of living rises, your savings will buy progressively less and less every year. And of course the interest on your investment, which is fixed and can never increase, will buy less and less, too.

THE MODERN WAY

You put your money into a well-chosen spread of Industrial Ordinary shares by joining THE 'M & G' THRIFT PLAN. As the cost of living rises, the value of your Ordinary shares tends to rise with it and so protect the purchasing power of your capital. Moreover, as your dividends are not fixed but are free to increase, the return on your investment should also rise in proportion.

To: MUNICIPAL & GENERAL SECURITIES COMPANY, LIMITED, 9, Cloak Lane, London, E.C.4.

Please send me without obligation free copies of the booklets 'A New Deal for Savings' and 'The Plan and How it Works.'

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

P.1

THE 'M & G' THRIFT PLAN merits the closest study by every thinking man and woman who is planning to save for the future. Besides protecting your savings against rising costs, it is a practical scheme: you can send in your savings as and when you find it convenient; and of course you can make withdrawals whenever you wish. The plan is managed by Municipal and General Securities Company, Limited, who have specialized in investment management of this type since 1931.

OVER 1,000 'THRIFT PLANNERS' have already been enrolled during the last four months. SEND THE COUPON TODAY for two free booklets. Study them carefully and then consider whether you would not be wise to enroll, too.



MUNICIPAL & GENERAL SECURITIES COMPANY, LTD.,

9, CLOAK LANE, LONDON, E.C.4.

HOW MANY MONTHS AWAY IS YOUR EXPORT MARKET?

How much money do you lose on tardy transport methods?

How long is it since you thoroughly checked the costs of your present system of distribution of exports? Break it down completely, and find out how much each item on the long list is adding to your overheads. Find out how long it is taking to transport your goods from the factory to your overseas distributors.

You'll discover that, if you break down the costs of air transport in a similar way, it is very probable that this method of distribution would actually work out at more economical rates. And, taking the long term policy view, it is certain that the immense saving of time by air transport will greatly increase your potential market.

Every day saved on the time your goods take in transit increases your chances of a repeat order. The swifter supply follows on demand, the greater the potential turnover, the greater the goodwill you build up, and the greater grows your reputation as a reliable fast-moving organisation.

The immediate advantages of air transport, in terms of decreased costs, are equally valid. Cargo insurance premiums for all classes of goods are very much lower by air transport than surface freight. This is due to the fact that the goods are insured over a much shorter period—a few days, as against a month or more—and to the greatly reduced incidence of breakage and pilferage. The labour and material costs of

packaging are drastically cut, and innumerable further costs are either eliminated or considerably lessened.

By regularly exporting goods via AIRWORK ATLANTIC—Britain's only all-cargo airline—you put your exports on a fast-moving conveyor belt that swiftly, efficiently and economically distributes them to your customers throughout the world. It is difficult to exaggerate the advantages of regularly using the AIRWORK ATLANTIC service. And it is difficult to minimise, in the face of ever-intensifying competition, the dangers of failing to appreciate these advantages.

AIRWORK ATLANTIC flies direct, single-carrier routes to New York and Montreal from London, Manchester (subject to approval of the Governments concerned) and Glasgow, Frankfurt, Zurich and Milan. From its transatlantic terminals, it links with the other leading world airlines to provide fast cargo transport not only to destinations in North, South and Central America, but in Australia, New Zealand, the Pacific, Far East and Asia as well.

Go into this question of air cargo for your class of goods. There is an appointed agent, close to your office who is able and willing to help you with your export costing. Find out from him how AIRWORK ATLANTIC can help you.

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Member of the International Air Transport Association.

Here's everything you wish yourself in Britain's greatest Shop-window

It's OPEN now at Olympia in all its enthralling variety and beauty—this year's tremendous **Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition**. Here's where you see the new things first, here's all you've dreamed of for your own home.

You've looked forward to it for a year—and sure enough it's the most lavish display of goods for the home ever assembled under one roof. It's all yours for four fascinating weeks.



LOOK! Houses you can build or rent—a whole village of them, full of up-to-the-minute ideas.



Walk right into charming rooms and see for yourself all the latest ideas in design, decorating and lighting.

Here you are, gardeners! A restful oasis to gladden your eyes, and soft music all the time.



Something special for the handyman—a demonstration theatre of crafts. Tear yourself away if you can!

All for your delight

Regency Rooms of the famous. **Nylons Fair**—shows you all about your stockings. **Wedding Pavilion**—everything for a romantic occasion. Behind the scenes at the **Post Office**. **Family Doctor**—feature on home health. A better-than-ever **Food Section**. **Hall of Cookery**—where good cooks learn to be better. **Dutch Market**. **The Ideal Kitchen**. **Y.W.C.A. Flat, Denmark**—'at home with the Danes.'

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Ideal Home
EXHIBITION
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Open Daily (Except Sundays)
10 a.m. - 10 p.m.
ADMISSION 3/-
(Children under 15, half-price)

Tickets also obtainable from all branches of Keith Prowse, or direct from 'Tickets,' The Daily Mail, 20 Tudor Street, London, E.C.4

P-s-s-t!
**Are you
a Nibbler?**

Everyone's getting that nibbling habit now that Peek Frean *Twiglets* are here. And no wonder—these crisp, crunchy biscuits have such a thrilling savoury flavour! Buy a packet of *Twiglets* today; try them with soup or salad, coffee or cocktails—and you too will be a nibbler in no time!

Twiglets

Made by PEEK FREAN—makers of famous biscuits

BLUE BIRD LIQUORICE ROLLS



*A luscious
toffee with
a liquorice
flavour*



One of the famous
lines made by
BLUE BIRD



HARRY VINCENT LTD., HUNNINGTON, NR. BIRMINGHAM

There is no Substitute for Ovaltine Quality



DELICIOUS 'Ovaltine' provides the highest possible quality at the lowest possible price. No wonder it is the world's most popular food beverage!

- 'Ovaltine' differs from other food beverages in its scientific composition and in the proportions of its constituents. The vitamin content of 'Ovaltine' is also important.
- The 'Ovaltine' Farms and Laboratories, originally established to control the quality of the malt, milk and eggs used, are still the guide in purchasing supplies.
- Only world-wide demand and exceptional manufacturing resources make 'Ovaltine' quality possible at such a low price. It pays to buy the best.

The outstanding success and popularity of 'Ovaltine' have inevitably attracted imitations. But remember that imitations are not the same. Reject substitutes.

OVALTINE
contains
Nature's best
foods with
additional
vitamins

There is only **ONE** OVALTINE
The Vitamin-fortified Food Beverage

1/6, 2/6 and 4/6 per tin.



Exquisite sheets, pillowcases and towels by
Horrockses
the Greatest Name in Cotton

A woman never feels depressed

When Osram shows her at her best!



Osram
THE WONDERFUL LAMP

A **S&C** product. The General Electric Co. Ltd.

Also manufacturers of the famous Osram fluorescent tubes



Worried by INDIGESTION?

I've found the answer!

"I had just the same trouble some years ago... such sharp pains after eating, I never really enjoyed a meal. But I found the answer... 'Milk of Magnesia'; it put me right pretty quick and has kept me right ever since."

'Milk of Magnesia' is a mild laxative as well as an antacid—so it corrects acidity and keeps the system regular too.

4 oz. size 1/8—12 oz. size 3/4

'MILK of MAGNESIA'

TRADE MARK

The Answer to Acid-Indigestion



NEW! four degrees of lighting from one lamp!

NEVER anything like this before! This new, delightfully attractive 'REGULITE' Table Lamp gives you brilliant light for close work, normal for ordinary use, subdued for rest and relaxation, glimmer for the nursery or sick-room—simply by turning the switch on the base! Ideal also for television viewing.

Choice of ivory, pink and green in marbled finish and rich red. Shades in either the newest 'Rotaflex' in matching two colours, or white parchment with antique brown trimming. Use ordinary 60 watt bulb. For A.C. Mains.

PRICE: 64.7.6 Without shade: £3.18.4
WRITE TO US FOR DESCRIPTIVE LEAFLET

REGULITE

VARIABLE TABLE LAMP
The only lamp of its kind

P. W. BAKER & SONS (SALES) LTD.
Teddington Works, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx.
Sunbury-on-Thames 456

for character
and quality



SPORTSWEAT

Weatherproof...
...and washable

Write for name of nearest stockist



WINDAK LTD. WOODSIDE
POYNTON - CHESHIRE

MARCH WINDS and April shudders

Can spring be far behind? It certainly seems like it, when you're battered by March gales. March the Unpredictable in winter's last fling, and it catches you when you're least prepared to defend yourself.

At the bitter end of a long, exhausting winter, your normal resistance is at its lowest. Those sunshine reserves, which you store away during the summer, need replenishing.

You need imported sunshine—the extra warmth, the cheering strength of the Australian sun in Burgoyne's 'Tintara'. It's so rich and robust, so well matured, this full natural burgundy, which draws its goodness from ironstone soil.

'Tintara' burgundy winds you up when you're run down; it helps the convalescent back to health. Try it out. A glass or two with meals, another, perhaps mid-morning—and you'll be meeting spring on its own terms.

Send for free leaflet "Notes on Wine in Convalescence" from P. B. Burgoyne & Co. Ltd., Burgoyne House, Downgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

BURGOYNE'S TINTARA

FERRUGINOUS
13/- a flagon (a bottle and a half)
6/- a half-flagon. 6d. deposit on flagons.



Recommended by the Medical Profession for well over three-quarters of a century.



Silver
Cross

The world's
most exclusive
BABY COACH



HAPPINESS!

With affection, care and security,
living in homely surroundings—
our children's future is assured

This Voluntary Society
has nearly 5,000 children
now in its care, depending
on **YOUR HELP**

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gratefully received by the Secretary
CHURCH OF ENGLAND

CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

(formerly WAIFS AND STRAYS)

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"green label"
chutney
INDIAN MAKES
Quite
Right
NOTHING
BETTER
REFUSE SUBSTITUTES



your
good
health

PRIMULA
the Creamiest CHEESE SPREAD
and the Crispest CRISPREAD
Famous all over the world!

KAVLI PRODUCTS FOR PURITY

"Now tell me how you like my coffee"



Dress by Brenner Sports

LYONS
for
COFFEE

WHY DO THE MOST SUCCESSFUL HOSTESSES-
ABOUT-TOWN USE LYONS PURE COFFEE?

There's a very simple reason . . . Freshly-ground coffee beans will only make the best coffee if the beans themselves are fresh. The coffee beans used by Lyons are roasted and ground at the peak of their freshness, then the coffee is immediately aroma-sealed (by an exclusive Lyons process) in the well-known green tins. It is the freshest coffee you can buy.





*Helping Harrods
to Help you*

He's always there to greet you—
ready to open the door, carry your parcels,
help you park your car, call a taxi when you leave
and assist in any way he can...
he's one of Harrods helpful commissioners,
popularly known as the "Greenmen".
Many years ago, when Britain's first moving staircase
was installed at Harrods, a uniformed attendant
(the forerunner of today's "Greenman")
would wait at the top to help customers alight,
ready to comfort with smelling salts
anyone upset by the experience.
It has always been Harrods desire to give such
considerate and imaginative service;
to do everything
possible in fact
to make your
shopping a
real pleasure.



HARRODS LTD

SLOane 1234

LONDON SW1

*Say "NOILLY PRAT"
and your 'French'
will be perfect!*

Here's why you'll prefer it—

- ★ Everything the French know in the growing of grapes and blending of wines — is lavished on Noilly Prat.
- ★ Not a drop is bottled until the wine is fully matured — at least five years.
- ★ The unique 'French' tang of Noilly Prat is obtained by the traditional maceration of herbs and flowers, not by short-cut infusions.



★ Noilly Prat is still bottled in France in the traditional large vermouth bottle.

**NOILLY
PRAT**

*by insisting on Gin and Noilly Prat you ensure getting
'Gin and French'*

Sole Importers: WM. CHAS. ANDERSON & CO., 8 LIME STREET, E.C.3



Try this neat test—

SHORT NOILLY PRAT

—neat with a vest of lemon peel squeezed into and then dropped into the vermouth.

LONG NOILLY PRAT

—two fingers of Noilly Prat, add ice, top with soda.



BY APPOINTMENT SOLELY MANUFACTURERS
TO THE LATE KING GEORGE VI

**Huntley
& Palmers**

the first name you think of in

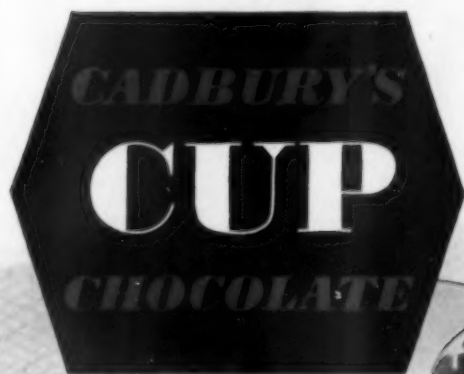
Biscuits

'second to none in

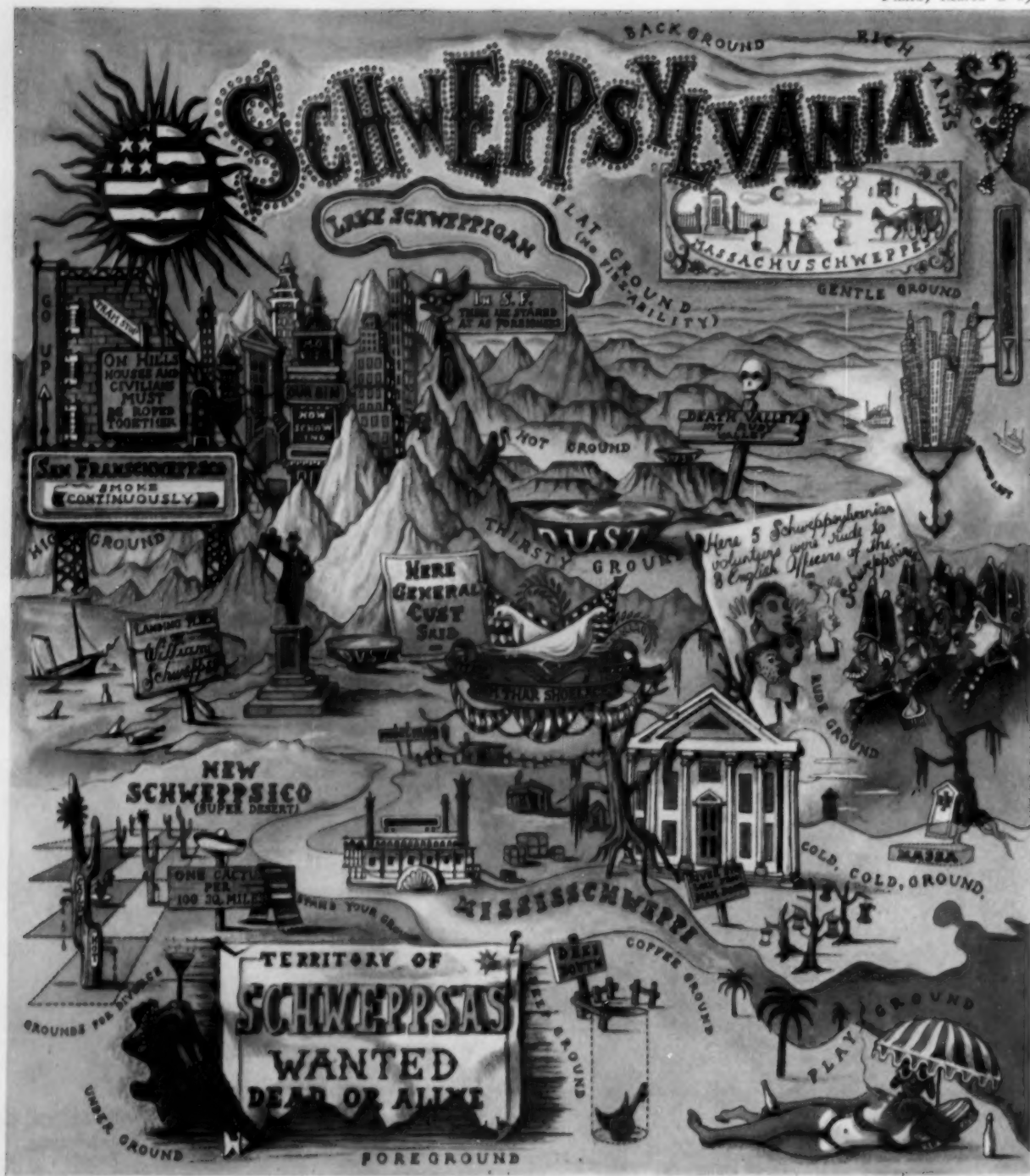
CAKES

Lovingly sprinkle these flakes
of superb chocolate on to very warm
milk . . . lightly stir . . . the richness, the
perfection of true chocolate instantly
awaits you! Surely no more luxurious,
no more truly well-bred drink than
Cadbury's Cup Chocolate exists!

2/6d. a half-pound



724



Written by Stephen Potter and drawn by London Sainthill

★ introducing
★ THE FORTY-NINTH
★ STATE

THERE ARE MANY LINKS between Schweppshire and Schweppsylvania, 49th State of the U.S. Careful examination of this pictorial map (with historical landmarks) will show that it is much the same as America only more so. The deep South is deeper, with shackier shacks. Its Western San Franschweppsco is gayer, and has more artless tramcars. Rich farm lands are quite close to places with No Signs of Life, not to be confused with places where there isn't supposed to be any sign of life, like the New Schweppshirian desert, which, of course, is living. Even Texas is outdone by Schweppsas; and the gentlemanliness of Boston, Mass. is still more so in Boston, Massachuschweppe, where the atmosphere is almost reminiscent of what might once have been what once was English.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ SCHWEPPEVERESCENCE LASTS THE WHOLE DRINK THROUGH



An essential contribution to



the art of gracious living

PERFECTOS FINOS 50's 14/6 100's 28/4
PERFECTOS No. 2 50's 11/6 100's 22/4

JOHN PLAYER & SONS, BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LTD.
(P3364)

Why do you have to have SEAGERS?

I always use SEAGERS at home.

I know—but aren't all gins much of a muchness?

Not at all. SEAGERS has much more muchness.

Is that why you drink it?

H'm, not entirely.

Mostly I drink it because I like it.

You consider yourself an authority on gins then?

No, an authority on what I like.

Seagers, Brims & Co. Limited, The Distillery, London, E.C.2

MARCH

NO STORYTELLER HE

When Snellius, on a March day in 1617, published his invention of triangulation, he did it in a way which caused, except among specialists, widespread apathy. Then and since. It was his own fault. Snellius omitted that *sine qua non* of early scientific discovery. He forgot to give the Press a good story. Every schoolboy knows about Archimedes, how he discovered the principle of something or other in his bath, and jumped out yelling "Eureka! I've got it!" Every schoolgirl knows about the apple that fell on the head of Isaac Newton. Gravity. Benjamin Franklin, the kite and the key. Electricity. Watt and the kettle in his mother's kitchen. Steam. All these deathless inventions are deathless because the inventors had the sense, or the luck, (a) to answer abstruse scientific problems at homely moments, (b) to give the story to the Press and history books. Snellius, poor chap, didn't invent triangulation in his bath, in an orchard, in a thunderstorm, or while waiting for a cup of his mother's tea. Any early seventeenth-century Public Relations Counsellor could have helped him put on a show. But Snellius, a lone wolf mathematician, preferred to go it alone. Which is why you don't know even now, who Snellius was and what triangulation is, and how they came together.



The Midland Bank confesses that its interest in triangulation is small. It has other things to think about—chief among them being the constant provision of a prompt and courteous banking service at more than 2,100 branches throughout England and Wales.

MIDLAND BANK LIMITED



By Appointment to the late King George VI
Manufacturers of Land-Rovers
The Rover Co. Ltd.



It's revealing to drive a ROVER . . .

You'll be astonished at the way the car takes rough surfaces smoothly in its stride. Ruts and potholes seem almost non-existent as the car glides over them.

The Rover co-ordinated suspension system allows plenty of vertical road wheel movement, while spring tensions and shock absorber settings ensure a smooth ride. The central bearing to the propeller shaft checks 'whip' and vibration.

You'll enjoy having both pace and quiet at your command. Even at high speeds, engine and transmission noise has been reduced almost to vanishing point.

The special cylinder head design of Rover engines with the Rover pace, whilst the extensive use of rubber pads and mountings, soundproof spraying and heavy carpeting make the naturally quiet engine almost inaudible.

You'll appreciate the infinite care and thought that has been paid to the comfort of driver and passengers.

All passengers sit well within the wheelbase, with front seat adjustable for height and rake and wide centre arm rests front and rear. Heating, demisting, ventilating and draught-proofing are exceptionally efficient.

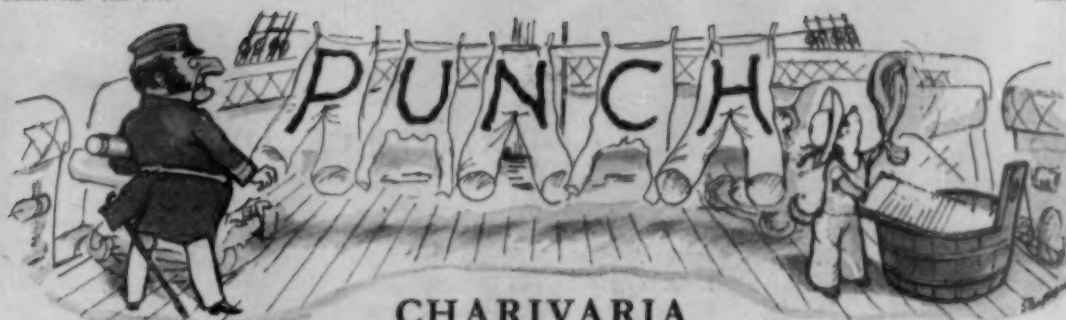
You'll feel confident even in the thickest and trickiest traffic, because a Rover is such a well-bred, obedient car to handle.

Direct central gear change with synchromesh on 2nd, 3rd and top, controlled free wheel for clutchless changes and well-planned dashboard layout make clumsy handling of a Rover practically impossible.

ROVER

Sixty · Seventy-Five · Ninety

Body and chassis are identical throughout the Rover range. However, three different engine sizes give motorists a made-to-measure service in which design and workmanship are uniformly high. New features common to all 1955 models include re-shaped luggage boot, larger rear window and flashing type direction indicators.



CHARIVARIA

MORE than two million words, announces the General Post Office, have been cabled from Australia about the Test matches. Most of them were Tyson.

All-round Excellence

MISS TALLULAH BANKHEAD's claim that "Washington and San Francisco audiences are the best in the world, but Texas audiences are just as good, and—come to think of it—there's really nothing like a London audience" may not at first glance seem to have much bearing on the arms race: except that this was roughly the sort of thing Mr. Selwyn Lloyd meant about Britain's night-fighters.

No Sad Suds for Me

SOUND waves do all the work in the new washing-machines recently exhibited in London. Washing without soap is nothing fresh of course, but



washing without soap substitutes is revolutionary. Wait for the slogans: "STRIP has more Vibrations," "STROP for the coloratura Boil," "STRAP washes Shriller," "Sing his Shirts clean with STRUP!"

Something Attempted

THE teacher's pocket is being energetically looked into. According to an announcement by the Ministry of Education, Sir David Eccles recently presided over a meeting of the Association of Education Committees, the Association of Municipal Corporations, the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions, the County Councils Association, the National Union of Teachers,

the Joint Committee of the Four Secondary Associations, London County Council, the Association of County Councils in Scotland, the Association of Councils of Counties of Cities of Scotland, the Educational Institute of Scotland and the Welsh Joint Education Committee, which agreed that data should be assembled "for consideration by a further meeting to be held as soon as possible."

Take a Carbon

GOOD platform phrases don't crop up every day, so Mr. Butler's remark about doubling our standard of living has been seized on eagerly by political speakers. Already Mr. Geoffrey Lloyd, Minister



of Fuel and Power, has tried it on a Birmingham audience, and Mr. Harold Watkinson, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Labour, has fired it off successfully at a meeting in Bristol. No one so far has asked what it means however. If it simply means two of everything instead of one, it should be remembered that political speakers will inevitably be included.

Riddle

One recommendation in the recent Coal Board report is that a "Small Bricks Department" should be set up. No one knows yet whether this will be concerned with putting in or taking out.

No High Jump Yet

EAGER for any straw, readers have clutched piteously at the Peking announcement that Communist China has accepted an invitation to next year's Olympic Games at Melbourne, only stipulating that Nationalist China shall be forbidden to enter. This does at least suggest that, despite Mr. Chou

En-lai's hints to the contrary, Chinese Nationalist athletes may still have a flag to compete under in 1956.

Mushrooms in the Morning

ONTARIO mothers were at first alarmed to find atomic submarines advertised in two languages on the family breakfast cereal packet, especially as a "free supply of atomic fuel" was thrown in. It was a relief to read that "some of your mom's baking powder" (*un peu de poudre à pâte de Maman*) would do just as well.

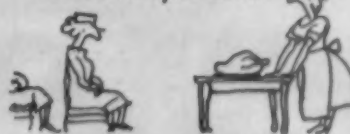
Near Thing

MEMBERS of the Overseas League were rapidly working up their displeasure over a *Times* article headed "LONDON SCHOOLBOYS TOO GOOD FOR TRANSVAAL: Vile Conditions Alien to Visitors," when they saw that it was all about some football match.

Nice Cup of Water

MRS. HUGH GAITSKELL has told the *Woman's Sunday Mirror* that lavish recipes can be brought within the reach of all by keeping the basic idea but cutting out the "fal-lals," and to prove

...first taking care to remove the fal-lals...



her point demonstrated a dish calling for "sherry, cream, egg-yolks, mushrooms and shallots" in which she "substituted mushroom stalks for the mushrooms, onions for the shallots and left out most of the other things." This could be a way round the tea shortage.

To See Ourselves

ACCORDING to a Sunday tele-gossip the Earl of Harewood had no television set at the time of his recent appearance

in a programme, but now intends to buy one. This certainly suggests one effective way for Lime Grove and the radio retailers to drum up new viewers. It may even explain how the panel-games, with their phenomenally high man-in-the-street consumption, manage to keep themselves on all this time.

Keep It Tough

FOUR *Ark Royals* have now been commissioned, and the captain of the fourth and latest is to accept, next month, a ship's bell of silver, accompanied by a specially bound book which,



says an Admiralty announcement, will record "the histories of all the *Arks*." In the interests of national prestige, however, the chapter about the dove and olive-branch will be omitted.

The Dog It Was

DOG-LOVERS everywhere are full of praise for the Cirencester man who found on moving into a council flat that dogs were banned, and outwitted the authorities by having his faithful Alsatian destroyed, stuffed and placed in a glass case in the sitting-room. They argue that it takes courage to sit there night after night under a beady gaze which seems to hint that a really intelligent dog could tolerate living elsewhere with a stuffed master.

Best of Intentions

THERE is an art in whipping up indignation. American senators no doubt hoped to gain support for their campaign against harmful "comics" by announcing that one of them pictured "a wife hacking a drunken husband to death with an axe"—whereas, in fact, they have probably alienated the sympathies of all the country's temperance organizations.

Dulce et Decorum

Headlines in *The Star* have described the new Navy weapons as "super-lethal."

To brave the atom's fiery breath

Is women's lot as well as men's,
But won't a fate that's worse than death
Cripple recruiting in the Wrens?



CO-EXISTENCE DEFINED

co-existence (kō', egzi-stēns). Mid.Fr., *existence*; Late Welsh, *co-existence*. [see CO-]. Living together, or with another.

I. State in which two or more people (nations, etc.) live together by virtue of some acquiescing in all the actions (wishes, etc.) of the others. (1587. If but the Queen of England did send her ships to Cadiz, where they might lay down their arms, there would be but slight reason why our two nations should not enjoy the fruits of friendly co-existence. PHILIP II. 1914. Belgium has only to allow German arms an unmolested passage through her territory, and her co-existence with Germany need not be endangered. WILHELM II.)

II. State in which two or more people (nations, etc.) live peacefully together. (1207. With my sword I shall bring all the blessings of peaceful co-existence to Asia. GENGHIS KHAN. 1649. With Ireland subdued we can bring to her people the benefits of peaceful co-existence under a Puritan surveillance. O. CROMWELL.)

III. State in which two or more people (nations, etc.) live together in enmity. (1954. We know the meaning of co-existence within the Labour Party. MORGAN PHILLIPS. 1955. Hostile Co-existence. THE OBSERVER.)

IV. The process of pacifying an enemy by sacrificing a friend. (1938. Those who earnestly desire to promote the co-existence of Germany with the rest of Europe, will join in urging the

government and peoples of Czechoslovakia to accept the terms now offered by Herr Hitler. N. CHAMBERLAIN. 1941. To collaborate with the German occupying forces is not to betray our country but merely to acknowledge the conditions of our own co-existence with them. PETAIN.)

V. arch.: State of friendly negotiation with Mr. Malenkov. (1955. We must seek co-existence with the Soviet Union by sponsoring high-level talks with Mr. Malenkov. A. BEVAN.)

VI. Modern: State of friendly negotiation with Marshal Bulganin. (1955. We must seek co-existence with the Soviet Union by sponsoring high-level talks with Marshal Bulganin. A. BEVAN.)

VII. Occasional: State of friendly negotiation with Mr. Khrushchev. (1955. We must seek co-existence with the Soviet Union by sponsoring high-level talks with Mr. Khrushchev. A. BEVAN.)

VIII. State in which differing creeds (religions, beliefs, etc.) live together without open conflict. (1570. My Papist subjects may know all the blessings of co-existence with their Protestant neighbours if they do but abandon their Romish practices. ELIZABETH I. 1936. Even those of our countrymen who have weakened in their loyalty to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are by our laws guaranteed the benefits of co-existence in Siberia. STALIN.)

IX. State in which nations are not at peace. (1954. We cannot secure peace, but we will strive for co-existence. A. EDEN.)

X. State in which nations are not at war. (1954. We do not want war, but we shall strive for co-existence. A. EDEN.)

XI. Common: State of friendly acquiescence in the actions of the Soviet Union. (1954. Those who criticize the methods of the Soviet police are not helping to forward co-existence between the Soviet Union and the West. W. WARBEY.)

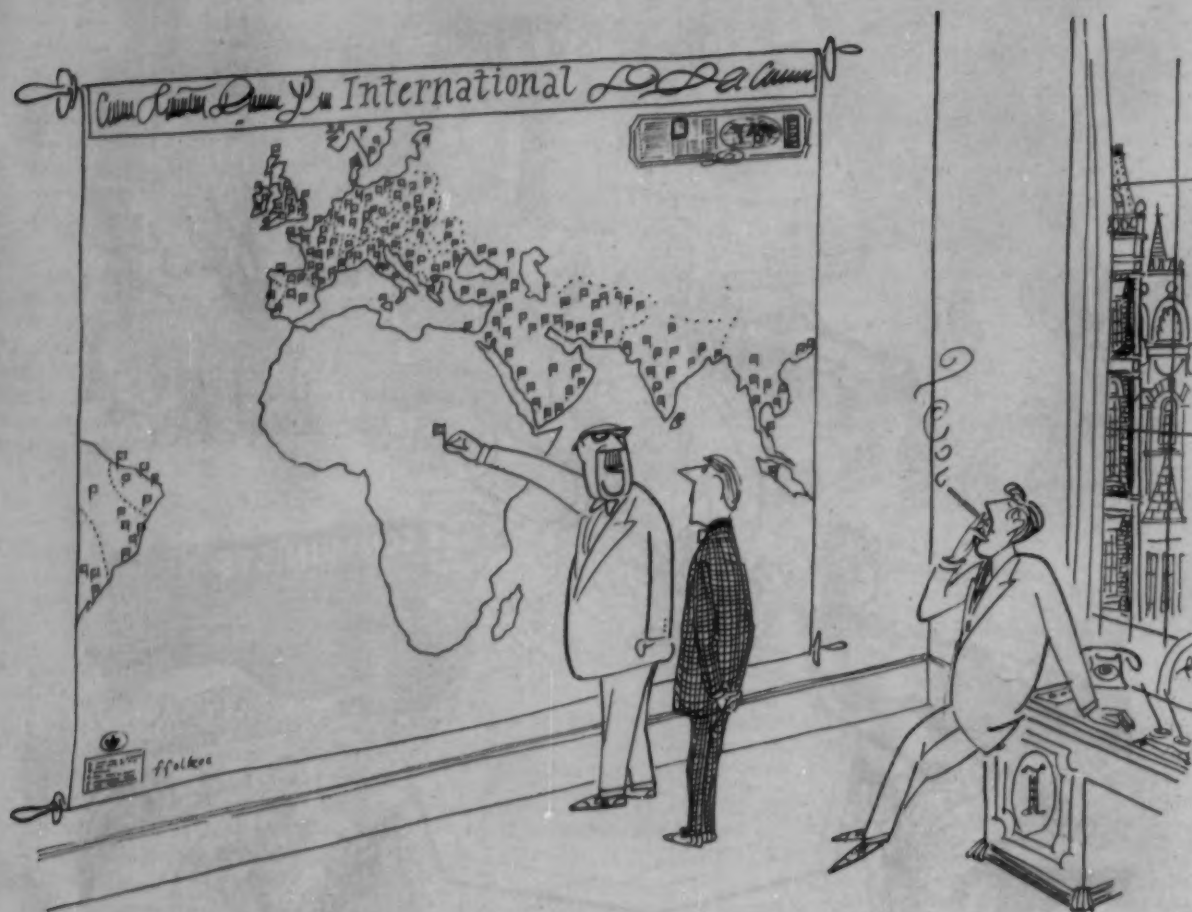
XII. Rare: State of friendly acquiescence in the actions of the United States. (1783. The co-existence of our empire and the new republic across the seas depends on the understanding which we can show towards her. E. BURKE.)

(See also SURRENDER, COWARDICE and TROJAN HORSE.) H. F.





PLACE DE LA DISCORDE



"We're giving you a larger district, Johnson."

Memories of Tilsit

By EDWARD HYAMS

MY distant connection Ezra Wilson had no real originality, yet he was bored by the commonplace and that made him seem wanting in perseverance. Before the war he worked in various businesses and diverse capacities: he had been a minor executive, a commercial traveller, a public relations officer and so forth. His manner was good and his earnestness impressive, his accent correct and his ties in good taste. He never had the least difficulty in getting jobs: it was keeping them which he found so hard. Consequently he had become acquainted with a large number of business men, and he had been surprised to discover how many of them, especially those of

small stature and a tendency to paunchiness in early middle life, had an interest in, and a great admiration for, Napoleon Bonaparte. My distant cousin told me that he had met at least half a dozen whose offices or homes were embellished or, as he said, cluttered with busts and prints of the French emperor in one of his characteristic attitudes; and whose bookshelves contained a disproportionate number of biographies and studies of Bonaparte.

My cousin had become accustomed to spotting these Bonapartists, as he called them, at a glance. He said that some had a certain way of standing with their little tummies thrust out and their bespectacled eyes fixed not, as at

first glance might appear, on the gratifyingly steep sales chart for the year, but beyond it upon some imagined mercantile Moscow to be conquered. Others brooded, three fingers thrust between first and second waistcoat buttons, their balding brows bent over some vast project of rationalization in the accounts department which might be thought of as a sort of codification of commercial laws. Ezra said that there was at least one in his collection who pinched ears, when he could reach them.

It was no doubt the memory of these Bonapartists which put into my cousin's head a means of making a good living after the war. One of the larger waves of the western front battle washed

him up at Tilsit for a week; he never knew why. There, in the lake, he found a rotten, water-logged raft half submerged in mud, and his active if limited imagination suggested to him that it might be the raft upon which the French and Russian emperors had once arranged to share the world. He filled a large packing case with pieces of rotten raft and sent it, under Army seals, across Europe to a reliable stores officer of his acquaintance, in southern Britain. This officer had formerly been buyer for a large department store, where he had learned commercial enterprise and the importance of being obliging. He was very ready, for a small charge, to help brother officers to import any small souvenir they might have picked up in the war zone. In his kindly way he handled a wide variety of such articles, from Aubusson carpets and Mercedes cars to a German ballerina sent over by a captain of Marines who was, no doubt, fond of dancing. This, then, was the officer who enabled my distant cousin to import and keep his pieces of the Tilsit raft.

During the last week of the war he fell into company with an American colonel who, in civil life, was a dealer in objects of vertu. Ezra told the colonel about his find, and it then appeared that even in the United States there were many emulators of the French emperor in business circles. My cousin was able to sell the whole consignment of rotten wood to the American for a very considerable sum of money. But as soon as the war was over and he had been demobilized it occurred to him that he could renew his supply without actually going to Tilsit. A rotten punt in a backwater of the Thames was his source of material, and he had the pieces of water-logged wood set in a silver claw mounted on the bronze plinth upon which was engraved the laurel-girt N for Napoleon, and the word "Tilsit." He sold in all nine of these relics of the great soldier. But he was not easy in his mind; although no chauvinist, my cousin is decently patriotic, and it occurred to him that far too many genuine objects of art and curiosity were being sent to the United States and being replaced in Europe by fakes. The pieces of raft he had sold to America might quite possibly be genuine relics; the pieces he was selling in Britain were not. He was, therefore,

glad enough to renounce this traffic when he had the first stroke of real luck in his whole life.

Ezra's brother, who owned a picturesque old inn in the country, a free house, and who detested Ezra, died suddenly, prematurely and intestate, and Ezra inherited the inn.

The inn was in a well-known hunting, shooting and fishing district and usually had a few semi-permanent guests all the year round. There were four when Ezra took over his legacy, and a fifth arrived the day after himself. This new arrival at once attracted Ezra's attention. He was short and inclined to stoutness below the waist. He had womanish hands and a curious way of fixing his dark eyes on people with intense keenness, which somehow failed to appear penetrating. He was inclined to brood in corners. His name was Oldroyd-Ellerman, and despite appearances he was not a business man but an oil engineer from the Middle East.

On the night of Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman's first day at the inn it was remarkably cold and all my cousin's guests gathered round the fire in the lounge. The fire, despite a keen east wind, was sulking. For a while this was ignored while Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman entertained the company with an account of the hazards and adventures in which his profession involved him: all received an impression that his life was spent in

great personal danger, dominating large bodies of turbulent Arabs, intransigent Texan oil workers and wandering Turkish gipsies by his power of command. It was hard to believe that he was what he claimed to be, yet a man may have a great heart and a hard mind whatever his outward appearance, and Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman himself did not seem conscious of any want of congruity between his body and his spirit.

Presently he fell silent and noticed that the efforts of a maid, a boots and Ezra himself had failed to enliven the fire. He offered to deal with it himself, and did so without waiting for permission, and in no time at all he had an immense fire roaring up the chimney. The roar, indeed, soon became very loud and sustained, until it was like the noise of the Metro heard from a Paris hotel. A Miss Crump pointed out that the chimney was on fire, and immediately thereafter the boots ran in to say that "great gouts" of flame were shooting from the chimney. Ezra followed with a bucket full of salt, which he threw on to the fire; this produced flames of various lovely colours but it did not put the fire out. The maid tried damping it down with several copies of *The Times* soaked in water, which filled the whole house with acrid smoke but had no other effect; the fire in the chimney was still roaring away.

Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman then, with



"Didn't realize they'd started those confounded toll-roads already."



"I'm asking Pickles to lose you again— that's what!"

the air of a man weary of incompetents, said that the way to put out a fire was to *blow* it out and that a burning oil-gusher could be extinguished by a blast of dynamite. My cousin said that this was very interesting and that he would bear it in mind if he ever had occasion to put out a burning oil-gusher, but that his present object was not to blow up his inn—he had only just inherited it—but to put out the fire in the chimney. Moreover he said that he had no dynamite about him, as it happened. Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman said that he had some small charges in his luggage—he had apparently been under the impression that the local trout-stream owners would let him try dynamiting their water—and he explained about lines of least resistance which, with proper care, made it quite safe to explode dynamite up a chimney. He swept aside all objections, and having run upstairs came down with his dynamite and fuse. Everyone, including my cousin, left the lounge. Ezra stood his ground by the door and watched this Napoleonic man light the fuse and thrust the stick up the chimney and close the iron lid which was provided for cutting off the chimney from the hearth in summer. There was a boom which shook the whole house, but the roaring

in the chimney immediately ceased. The boots, who had been on watch in the street, rushed in to say that the flaming soot had been shot skywards in a great ball of fire; with it had gone a great deal of loose brick. No one was injured by these missiles, but the fire being carried by the wind set two ricks burning, and a sow in a neighbour's pig-sty, shocked into a traumatic condition, ate half her litter before she could be prevented. However, the fire in the chimney was certainly out and Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman stood in front of the hearth with three fingers stuck between the first and second buttons of his waistcoat, receiving thanks and praise with the brooding air of godlike indifference which, he probably felt, was what his idol had looked like after Wagram.

Or should it be Austerlitz? He had, indeed, been victorious, yet the victory was not perfect. The explosion which had extinguished the fire must have weakened the ancient chimney-stack, and the wind reaching gale force in the night blew it over. That part of it which carried the television antenna crashed through the roof and into the room where Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman was sleeping. He was not much hurt, but he was pinned into bed by the horizontal member of the antenna and lay there

between the vertical members, like a cow looking over a gate as it were, much mortified by the fact that the half score of people engaged in extricating him were, despite concern and discomfort and the prevailing mood of disaster, unable to prevent themselves from smiling, and even from outbreaks of *fou rire*, at the spectacle offered them.

When Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman had been extracted from bed and the H-antenna and had huddled on some clothes he became very angry indeed. He swore terribly at my cousin, but first in Arabic and then in Texan. As my cousin did not understand these languages the angry man began to curse him in English: my cousin said that Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman called him a clot and an irresponsible, half-witted, incompetent, slobbering, clownish bumpkin for daring to take guests in a house which fell on them in the night; and for charging them an exorbitant figure for the privilege of being buried beneath an avalanche of bricks and television aerials. He said that my cousin would hear without delay from Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman's solicitor. He pointed out that this law officer was also the attorney employed permanently by the Near-Eastern Oil Corporation, described him as no piker and said that my cousin would be lucky to get out of court with the clothes on his back and the gold filling in his back teeth, if they were gold, which Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman doubted.

My cousin saved himself from ruin and the loss of his damaged but still licensed house by the most subtle phrase of flattery which had ever, in a lifetime of flattering business men for a living, occurred to him. With extraordinary presence of mind he turned to Miss Crump, who had witnessed Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman's outburst with a great deal of pleasure, and said, loudly and clearly, "What a pity that so great a man should be so ill-bred."

A look of extraordinary complacency came over Mr. Oldroyd-Ellerman's face. He waved the others from the room with an air of condescension. He did not sue my cousin and he stayed at the inn for three weeks, becoming a general favourite, and before he left he bought one of the remaining Tilsit raft fragments for twenty pounds: it was a cut price, of course, but my cousin was no longer really in the relic business and only sold the thing to oblige.



"And you might send the Rembrandt to the cleaners, Simpson."



Unloading

By R. G. G. PRICE

(With a sympathetic nod to Mr. Pater de Vries)

AS I walked eagerly out of the house Mrs. Pine reached my gate. With a wave I showed her the man next door nursing his aged mother and said "Zombie and Son." She disengaged herself without comment, but before she could get clear I had described him as a semi-precious young man who wore his clubs on his sleeve. Three items ticked off already. It was going to be one of my better days.

My first objective was the window of the art shop. "Mondrian is the copyist's painter," I said to Mrs. Hope, who was looking interestedly at a large picture of cardinals roistering. It had been there for some days so I was able to remark, "*La nuit, tous les Eminences sont grises.*" She moved away after Mrs. Pine, and I waited some time, hoping that an American serviceman would pass to whom I could say "The only thing I know about baseball is that little pitchers have long ears." It got cold waiting and I moved into the milk bar. "All I want is a Cadillac, a penthouse and a typist's pool," I snapped out as I swung in. "Small coffee and I don't like it *chambé*." "Your rejection slip is showing," said the waitress coldly. "Trying to make conversation here is like trying to sell gold shares in Eldorado," I said irritably to the man next to me, though it was not scheduled until the evening. "You mean . . ." he

began, showing himself unsympathetic. I turned to the man on the other side, who was eating well over half-way into a ham roll. Before he got clear of it I had described London where the streets are paved with phenobarbitone and gone on to conspicuous consumption as in *La Dame aux Camelias*. He only wrapped the lobe of his left ear round a matchstick and said he supposed he must be off.

It was early for lunch, but I had several menus to inspect: there had to be curry before I could meditatively say to the waiter "Too much hydrochloric and not enough nitric." I could hardly hope for venison, with its opportunities for refusing it with a reference to passing the buck.

Crossing the street I saw Mona Gipp. I decided to stun her with a striking simile. The opening "My heart leaps when I behold you like a suddenly uncloistered stag" was brushed aside by her remark that she was going to the theatre to see a leading actor-manager. "And his plaster cast," I added before she could draw breath or bead. Her husband, as I once mentioned in a long newsy letter to a cousin in Antigua, is the kind of man who wears an invisible lapel button saying "V.I.P."

Pausing only to tell a postman that the previous night I dreamed the nurse came up to my hospital bed and said

"I've come to change your stitches," I advanced on Mitzi Reinwerter, deciding to try her with the social comment "It is terrible to find as one grows older that what one considered in youth the faults of a generation are really the faults of an age-group." She was not listening and began to talk immediately about her children, who are obsessed with space travel. This was better than nothing and I was able to refer to a planet where you could literally step on the gas. I rather wasted a reference to Swinburne's gangster, The Fleetfoot Kid, as she was by then undeniably fleeing me.

While I was thinking that I was tired of ventriloquists who drank and smoked and should wait to be impressed until I saw one who could throw his voice while eating nougat, I bumped into Scott Calloway, who once, describing a church in a guide-book, wrote "Nave—Scurvy." I could see he was in a hurry, and as there was no time for elegant transitions I fired straight in with "The Negro Spiritual is the only art produced by Nonconformists."

I was looking round for somebody to tell about a friend whose hangovers always ended in his regretting the bourbons, when a policeman, who had once invented a piano with a non-standard keyboard and clutch, said shyly to me "Would you call New York a courtesy capital, sir?" Since I admitted that I would, he got bolder and began a rambling story about an eighteenth-century mob going in for arson on prisons and crying "The Fleet's lit up." When he produced his notebook and in tones now strident confessed to being a Jack of all trades and ace of none, I felt my day slipping out of my control. With hanging head I turned for home, unable to face the lunch, the afternoon, the cocktail party at which I had hoped to say of my host "He is not a yes-man, but when he can answer in the affirmative he glows." It is a sad moment in the life of a wit when he has to discharge his cargo to his wife.

6 6

"Mr. A. C. R. Punnett said that Mr. Bell talked glibly about the economic rent houses, but there were very few people in Carlisle who could afford it. With rats the cost might be as much as £2 5s."

The Carlisle Journal

How about just mice?



The Battle of the Bulge

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

Y eyes have fallen from the scales. I daren't look at them again, for that first quick glance seemed to tell me that I had put on another two pounds. In short, the curse has come upon me once more, and I shall have to diet.

Like Diamond Jim Brady. Diamond Jim Brady was a prominent—especially when seen sideways—figure in the life of New York at the beginning of the century. A man of habit, he dined every night on three goes of orange juice, three dozen oysters, one dozen hard-shelled crabs, six lobsters and two steaks, topping the meal off with a two-pound box of chocolates. One night he waved away the waiter who was placing the chocolates before him.

"Bring a one-pound box," he said. He was dieting.

"There are many benefits from losing weight," says the booklet which is my constant companion, "besides

looking younger and more charming. The heart does its work with less effort, so that the circulation to every part of the body improves." Well, that sounds all right. I am not sure if it is quite safe for me to become more charming, but I am in favour of improving the circulation to every part of the body, so I shall try to resemble the young Lycidas of whom John Milton (1608-1674) wrote in one of his lesser known passages:

*Young Lycidas, a lad of fourteen stone,
Young Lycidas, who late had left his
beer,
Junkets and cream and all such plumping
cheer,
In timorous dread of swell'n obesity,
And, singing, turned him to his simple
fare
Of herbs and rusks and other starchless
foods,
The which he ate, trusting he might
become
Less convex in the tum.*

The trouble is that all the diets you

see recommended by those Harley Street physicians in the papers are so repellent. It is as though they sat up at nights thinking how best to remove the joy from the lives of their fellow men. I suspect them of nursing a secret grudge against the human race and trying to revenge themselves on it for their own misfortunes.

"That tooth of mine on the left has started to ache again," mutters the Harley Street physician. "I cut myself shaving this morning. It's raining. The horse on which I put my last stethoscope finished seventh in the two-thirty at Hurst Park, and my wife has run away with the chauffeur. But never mind. I will dash off an article for the Press, advising those overweight to eat nothing but prunes and blotting paper. That'll learn 'em."

Rice, they say, is good, but one must never forget that the Red Chinese live on rice, and look at them. Rather than become a red Chinaman, I would prefer





to be like Georgi Malenkov, who, to quote Milton again, resembles young Lycidas' friend Thyrsis.

*Thyrsis, the bulkiest of youths since born,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
Who shook his tumbled locks and stern
bespoke—*

*This banting is a fearsome thing, God
woot!*

All rot!

*For me, he cried, for me at least,
The groaning board, the sumptuous
feast,*

*The rich collation, all one bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out
With jellies, pastries, creams and pies,
The cynosure of hungry eyes,
Such meals as youthful urchins dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.*

Of course, there are fortunate people who are trying to put on weight. Yet even these have their worries. There

was a story in the paper the other day about the eminent baseball pitcher, Lefty Gomez. When he joined the New York Yankees, it appears, he was undernourished and skinny, and the owner of the club, a Colonel Ruppert, decided that he needed building up. So he sent him to a health farm, where he drank six quarts of milk a day and put on eighteen pounds.

Spring came and with it Spring training down in Florida, and Colonel Ruppert, reminding him of all the money which had been spent on that milk, urged Gomez not to exert himself, lest the eighteen pounds come off again. So he found a comfortable bench and was reclining on it, thinking of life, when the club manager, a Mr. McCarthy, came along.

"Hey, you!" said Mr. McCarthy. "Do you think this is a rest home? Get out there and run."

He got out there and ran, and Colonel Ruppert, observing him, drew his breath in sharply.

"Gomez!" he shouted reproachfully. "All that money I spent on milk! Sit down!"

"Run!" said McCarthy.

"Stop running!" said Colonel Ruppert.

I don't know how it all came out in the end, but it must have been most trying for the young pitcher.

I think that if I had my life to live over again I would be a corpse in a detective story. Corpses in detective stories always seem to do themselves extraordinarily well without ever putting on extra weight.

"I have concluded the autopsy," says the police surgeon, "and the contents of Sir Reginald's stomach are as follows:

*Caviar frais
Consommé aux Pommes d'Amour
Sylphides à la crème d'Ecrevisses
Mignonette de poulet petit Duc
Points d'asperges à la Mistinguett
Suprême de foie gras au champagne
Délices de foie gras Strasbourg
Friandises
Diablotins
Corbeille de fruits exotiques.*

... Oh yes, and about half a pound of cyanide, of course."

And in Chapter One Sir Reginald is described as a stern, gaunt old man with the slender lines and the lean, racehorse slimness of the Witherington-Delancys. It looks as though it were the cyanide that does the trick, and it might be worth trying. I would greatly prefer it to the orange juice or carrot juice or another other of the foul juices which the Harley Street boys are cooking up for me.

6 6

"THE HUSBAND WHO KNOWS BEST"

Before Celia Johnson accepts a new part both she and her husband have to be convinced that the part and the play 'are absolutely right. Usually Peter and I agree. If we don't, I accept his verdict.' Miss Johnson's faith in her husband's critical judgment is not just wifely submission. Peter Fleming is an Oxford 'Double First' in English Literature—as well as a first-rate estate administrator, a dead accurate shot, and an intrepid explorer."—*Housewife*

Just the chap.

Modern Types

Mrs. McMammon

By GEOFFREY GORER

ONE of the things Mrs. McMammon likes about being rich is that she can afford the best of everything. And not merely one, mind you; if she wants more she can have more. As, for instance, you don't always want to watch the telly in the lounge; so there's another walnut inlay big screen in the sun-parlour; and in the new modern all-electric streamline kitchen there's actually one built in to the wall, placed so that you can see it from the breakfast nook or from the stove. When they don't go out, Mrs. McMammon always cooks the evening meal herself, and sometimes there's a programme she doesn't want to miss. Not that she couldn't afford a cook, mind you, if she wanted one; but never having been used to being waited on, it fuses her to have servants round the place tripping up over her feet all the time; she much prefers to have dailies who finish their work and go away.

Although Mrs. McMammon expects people who work for her to get on with the job, she also understands the necessity of a nice sit-down; and often of a morning, when she isn't out in the car (she has to have a chauffeur for that, she'd never be able to drive, but he lives out, thank goodness) she'll share the dailies' elevenses and have a good gossip. She is deeply interested in all their family affairs, will give sensible advice if asked and, though she does not throw her money about, she is always ready to provide help when it is *really* needed. Mrs. McMammon's dailies are very attached to their employer; and for their employer eleven o'clock is often the pleasantest hour of the day.

Although Mrs. McMammon has nearly everything that money can buy, and thoroughly enjoys it, it cannot be disguised that she is often lonely and occasionally bored. When Jim, her husband, suddenly made all that money during and immediately after the war, it seemed silly to stay in the small terraced house where they had spent the earlier years of their married life; and so they moved to a really posh residence standing in its own grounds (freehold, mind you) in a very nice neighbourhood, not quite country but at the same time not town-y.

By general consensus the neighbourhood is very nice, but the McMammons cannot say the same about the neighbours. A proper unfriendly lot they are, treat you as if you were something the cat had brought in, unless they want to get something out of you; and after a couple of experiences the McMammons have found that the apparent friendliness which accompanies the soliciting of a subscription or financial contribution subsides as soon as the cash is handed over—until the next time.



Mr. and Mrs. McMammon disturb the neighbours because they are almost completely without affectation. They are an ordinary middle-aged couple with only the minimum of education who have somehow (precisely how is very obscure) recently acquired a great deal of money which they spend rather ostentatiously. They make no pretence at all to being better born or better educated than they are, to having artistic or sporting tastes, nor do they appear to wish to acquire the habits and customs of the neighbourhood into which they have bought themselves. This is particularly distressing to the people who made their money in the last war but one, and who have been trying to conceal this fact for the last thirty years.

Despite the trouble they have gone to, not all the neighbours have managed to acquire all the signs of gentility, and these feel particularly threatened by the McMammons, who don't go to any trouble at all; and their children have

been turned so thoroughly into ladies and gentlemen that they find it difficult to be even moderately civil to the young McMammons, who were too old to go to the "right" schools when their parents could afford it. It doesn't matter so much for the boys, who are away all day in Jim's business, but it makes young Ireen ("I wish you'd learn to call me Ireenee, mother") very unhappy, and she takes it out on her Mum, always nagging her to change her ways, to copy the others. Dad has given Ireen a pony, and the most smashing frocks that money can buy; but it's no good, she hardly ever gets any invitations.

Even when they were not at all well off, Mr. and Mrs. McMammon used to enjoy going out to a nice pub or café for a bite of something to eat and a few drinks, most Saturdays; now they're rich they go out several times a week, and when Ireen is with them she suffers agonies of embarrassment. Mr. and Mrs. McMammon enjoy themselves rather noisily, and quite often end the evening "not tight but tiddly," as Mrs. McMammon says; but what is even worse from Ireen's point of view, they will insist on offering gins and small ports—even occasionally champagne—to any of the people they can recognize by sight. Usually these offers are refused, with more or less politeness; even when they are accepted, people don't get matey.

If she didn't get a little tiddly Mrs. McMammon would often feel pretty mokey when she returns from an evening out. All her instincts are to be friendly and generous, and since she is as honest and unpretentious to herself as she is to the rest of the world, she realizes that her friendliness and generosity are spurned by the people among whom her good fortune has thrown her. As she looks round her lovely Louis bedroom suite in gilt and pink satin, and wriggles out of her two-piece foundation garment (custom made, mind you) she often feels like having a good cry. But it would upset Jim if she did, he would ask her why and she'd never be able to lie to him, and so she gallantly settles down quietly beside him without saying a word.

How Does It Sound?

By RICHARD MALLETT

PHONETICS, I am pleased to note, are in the air. Within a few days recently we were told both how to pronounce Pflimlin and—in more different places—how the actors in a Hollywood film pronounce the still more subtly nuanced French name Désirée.

The terms of reference in these cases were different, of course. The assumption was that we wanted to know how to pronounce Pflimlin *right*, no matter how brief the period in which we were liable to be called on to make use of this information; whereas the assumption about Désirée was that we already knew how to, and could, pronounce it right, and merely wished to smile indulgently at what Hollywood does with it.

(Two of this last group of three assumptions may be justified.)

In each instance, however, the demonstration method is the same: a rough approximation in English phonetic spelling. Something like Pflcemlan, or Pflcemleen, or Pflamlan; something like (according to some critics) Daisy Ray, or (according to others) Dezzie Ray.

Now this is my meat: I love phonetic approximations; I only wish more people would take some interest in them. It is very nearly fifteen years, as the time flies, since I wrote in these pages a protest about the inaccuracy of popular phonetics, contriving to quote a number of my own vastly superior versions while so doing. But in all these years, have my reasoned remonstrations had any effect? One is driven to the conclusion that people judged the war to be more

important. A whole new generation has grown up in the pitiful belief that "ori" is a laughably exact phonetic spelling of the way a Cockney pronounces the word "all."

That's an old point, of course: I don't pretend I was the first to object there. But that makes it all the more irritating that such absurd conventions should survive, while new coinages on a far more scientific principle—modesty (to my annoyance) forbids my mentioning by whom—fail even to be understood. I have, over the last fifteen years, collected a splendid new array of what I consider exact phonetic renderings; but as for getting anyone else to agree with me . . .

The trouble seems to be that most people, without giving the subject any thought, have a vague belief that a particular word exists in an ideal form somewhere out of sight, that the commonly accepted spelling represents this, and that any odd-looking deviation from that spelling is an adequate guide to any pronunciation that sounds odd. The idea that one can listen to speech as mere sound, and try to reproduce that sound on paper without being influenced in any way either by the meaning of the original words or by the correct spelling of them, is quite beyond their comprehension. Confront them with the word *umnya* (with a Southern English accent on the first syllable; Northern English, *amnya*) and some of them will produce something like the sound it is meant to represent; but once let them know that here is an exact imitation of the way many Cockneys and others pronounce the phrase "How many have you . . ." and you spoil everything. Those words are *there*, they feel; therefore they must somehow be suggested; and they proceed to make a complete wreck of a carefully considered phonetic version by laboriously restoring nearly all the sounds that had been deliberately left out.

My collection includes another word, in what might be called the same language, of which their hash would (once they knew the translation) turn out to be even more diversified with fragments of vowel gristle and consonantal bone. This is *umgunav* (Northern, *amganav*), which I assure



you is a most precise notation of one extremely frequent—I wouldn't even say "common"—way of pronouncing the words "I am going to have."

But will the average earnest reader allow himself to take this as a sound, which he is to copy? Never: he will start positively before the beginning, because he knows that it should "really" begin with I, and he will squeeze out this sound as a preliminary and carry on from there. As there is no visible apostrophe, ten to one he will even fetch up an *h*. It won't sound right, of course, but he is used to that: he "can't do the dialect" when he tells a story, and it would make him even more uneasy than his listeners are now if he could.

The only phonetic versions with any real hope of accurate reproduction are those with familiar words in them; and this is where the Bus-Conductor part of my collection comes in. Nobody, I think, need fail to differentiate correctly between my three fine specimens of the bus-conductor's most frequent incantation—

Animal phase, police!
Ammo feather bees!
n'war n'peace!

and I think the most literal-minded should be able to make a fair shot at Awkward Sucks! even with the distraction of knowing that it was intoned near Oxford Circus.

But bus-conductors are almost alone in the conservatism or economy of their phonetic architecture; and with anything purely phonetic, anything literally unrecognizable, the average reader is not merely lost but absolutely determined to proceed in the wrong direction. Almost impossible, for instance, to get him even started on an attempt to pronounce *Chinaba-datcha* without providing the quite fatal information (which I got from the context) that the lady whose ejaculation this was thought she was saying "The children absolutely adore her."

Ah, well. At least, when one writes on this subject one has the satisfaction of knowing that one influences the reader. If you doubt this, look me (or anyone else) in the eye and declare that you have read so far without once moving your lips or whispering. Why, I could hear you from here, murmuring and stuttering to yourself like a refrigerator.



Miss Gioconda of 1955

Twenty-five artists at once recently painted Miss Gina Lollobrigida. The portraits have been described as "potential Mona Lisas of 1955."

IT'S easy when you're older than the rocks on which you sit,
Or, vampire-like, hebdomadally die;
When you've trafficked with the Kurds, and had affairs with birds,
That enigmatic smile's a piece of pie.

But I'm just a simple film-star, and it isn't me a bit,
And although I really try to fill the frame
This display of teeth and chest is my contemporary beat
At burning with a hard and gem-like flame.

B. A. Y.



A Roman Holiday : Two Characters in Search of a Play

By ANTHONY CARSON

WEDNESDAY began with a brilliant shout. The sun was tapping on the roofs, a baby screamed in the courtyard, and a brigade of bells charged the sky. The door of the hotel room burst open and Antonio, the man of all work, appeared with a tin can of hot water. Under the serene Roman mask of his face one sensed tunnels of subterfuge. The devil was after him.

"Good morning, good morning. Rise, for to-day is the Feast of St. Andrew!" he cried, placing the tin on the table between a packet of soap-flakes and Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, which I had lately bought for three hundred lire. "Also,

signor," he said, with a mock flourish of ceremony, "there is a little something for the waiter . . ."

"A little something . . ." I repeated, mystified.

"A little something for the waiter, you understand," he repeated, "towards the Feast and so on."

I gave him a hundred lire, and he loomed forward. "You are very good," he said loudly, like a gratified general. "Very good. Very complacent and sensitive."

I shaved, dressed, slipped the *Six Characters* into my pocket and made my way down the winding corridors of the

hotel. It was supposed to be the oldest in Rome and the cheapest. TORQUATO TASSO SLEPT HERE, said the card.

I wandered into the market to a vegetable, meat and flower opera. A hundred bucolic stalls, shaded by palanquins, wooed gods and customers. Fragments of street song, shouts and declamation reverberated over the square. In one corner an auction had started, and the auctioneer, to attract custom, was throwing handkerchiefs into the air. A swarm of women appeared from nowhere and the handkerchiefs vanished into bodices before they could touch the ground. I entered the Piazza Navona, which shines like a heavenly clearing in the brown forest of

Rome, passed the church of St. Agnes in Agony, where the angels on the façade flirt eternally with the protesting giants of the Bernini fountain, and sat outside a café, awaiting my friend. I opened *Six Characters* and began reading feverishly. We were seeing the play that night at the Goldoni and I had only got half-way through it.

The two waiters in the café, eager to mix in other people's business and enlarge their tips, had done their best to help me. A policeman on the beat, a chestnut seller and numerous Roman idlers, attracted by noise like fish to a crumb, had joined in, shaking their heads. Any kind of philosophy which does not include Appearance is unwelcome to Romans. Hating to be alone, hating silence, swallowing darkness and misery like undefined medicines, they spit out philosophy as if it were fish bones. Pirandello had further complicated matters by introducing a word "*Sì dissuga*." This had the Piazza Navona completely baffled, and the policeman had to quell an argument between three Neapolitans and a group from the Abruzzi, who had swiftly changed the subject under discussion into a fierce political discussion. Finally my Roman friend Luigi arrived. "Don't worry about one word," he cried, disguising the fact that he was mystified himself. I continued to read, only to discover that none of the other characters in the play understood the word either.

That night we went to the Café Greco. Here, sooner or later, everyone in Rome meets the people they are pretending to avoid. The annihilated friend appears and is greeted with rapturous politeness. This speed of change, like flying-saucers, seems bewildering until one realizes that Rome abhors any sort of vacuum. We came into this circus and Luigi paused long enough to allow his friends to remark how ill he was looking, and introduced them to me. There were bored princes hunting film-extras, film-extras hunting film-directors, Americans hunting the smartest meaning of life, and middle-aged ladies displaying their legs and their jewellery. "We are going to see *Six Characters* at the Goldoni," said Luigi. "My God," they said. One of them took me aside confidentially. "I should warn you," he said, "you are new to Rome. Nobody goes to *Six*

Characters at the Goldoni unless they are socially outcast. Luigi is always promising to take people there when he's let down by his mistress. He never goes."

While we were eating dinner in a cheap restaurant near the Palace of Justice (which is referred to formally as the Frightful Palace) I managed to finish the last act of the play. It was already 9.15, the scheduled time for the curtain to go up, and we had only reached the spaghetti. "Don't hurry," said Luigi, "the curtain doesn't really go up until nine-thirty or a quarter to ten. Also it has struck me that Wednesday is rather a bad night for *Six Characters*. The house is full of paper and rather dreary people will be there. My friend, who is in the cast, has also got a cold, she tells me (if one can believe her), and besides that all the cast are practically starving. And it has started to rain." "But what about the work I have put into *Six Characters*?" "I agree," said Luigi. "You have done splendidly. You are possibly one of the few people in Rome who understands the play. I promise you we will go on Friday."

That Friday we went to the theatre

as agreed, and had a drink at the bar before the play started. Astonishingly it was full of armour and halberdiers. "I can't understand the armour," said Luigi. "However, let us take our seats." We went to our places near the front in an almost empty theatre and sat down. Before us was a bare stage with a wooden staircase. The lights were lowered, and presently three further figures appeared, were challenged and began to converse. Concentrating intently, I came to the conclusion that they were discussing a ghost. "What is this ghost?" I asked Luigi. "Accept my apologies," said Luigi, "but this appears to be *Hamlet*. Never mind, you can buy a copy in Italian, it is only three hundred lire, and you have *Romeo and Juliet* thrown in. We will come and see it again to-morrow."

Overflow Overflow

"This repeat showing is necessitated by the tremendous success of the premiere showing in December, when hundreds were unable to gain admittance. Those who came before are asked to come again and bring others."—From a cinema advertisement



"A table near the orchestra, please."



A Time for Compromise

By H. F. ELLIS

THE thing boiled up very rapidly.

It was on Monday, February 14, that *The Times* revealed that disagreement had arisen between the B.B.C. and the British Transport Commission about a plan to "use actors to portray complaining railway passengers in a projected television programme." "All we objected to," the Transport Commission's spokesman had said, "was that the B.B.C. wanted to put actors on the train, then take a film of them complaining about different things."

By February 17 Sir Gerald Barry, in his capacity as editorial adviser to the TV programme concerned, had declared war in *The Times* Correspondence Columns with the phrase "an important issue of principle." He also spoke of

democratic duty, vigilance, freedom of expression, and the need to ensure that "such an attempt at interference as we have just seen manifested by British Railways should not go unchallenged." These were fighting words.

On February 18 a Mr. J. B. Birks wrote of "licence rather than freedom" and scored heavily by being the first to use the word "monstrous."

It was time for the P.R.O.s to come down into the lists. On the 19th Mr. J. H. Brebner, on behalf of the Transport Commission, roundly declared that "British Railways owe it to themselves to oppose misrepresentation"; and he pointed out that "the use of actors who would mix with bona fide passengers and utter scripted complaints would obviously lead the public to believe

that the complaints were factual." On the 22nd Mr. Douglas Ritchie, Head of Publicity at the B.B.C., took up the gauntlet thus boldly thrown down. "I am sure Mr. Brebner will forgive me for pointing out that he must have been misinformed," he thundered; and he followed up this home thrust with the astonishing statement that, at the conference between the B.B.C. and the Commission to arrange the details of the programme, the use of actors "was not even discussed." Mr. Brebner replied on the 23rd with some damaging quotes from the B.B.C. script, in which the detestable word "actor" several times occurred.

The final upshot of this titanic clash of P.R.O.s is not, at the time of writing, known. What does emerge, however, is

that there has been a palpable lack of statesmanship in the handling of this not very complicated affair. The B.B.C. desired, in the interests of realism, that their railway programme should contain references to dirt, dust, cold, stale sandwiches, late trains, and, if time permitted, Liverpool Street Station. The Transport Commission felt that, in the interests of fair play, their point of view should be put forward. Very well then. The wishes of the two sides are not irreconcilable. Surely there is a case here for compromise—e.g. by using B.B.C. actors speaking a script approved, if not actually written, by the Transport Commission. Would not something on the following lines satisfy both parties?

SCENE: *a terminus. The door of a third-class compartment bursts open and sixteen B.B.C. actors tumble out on the platform.*

INTERVIEWER: Would anyone care to say a few words about British Railways?

FIRST ACTOR (*glancing at his watch as he struggles to his feet*): We have had an excellent run. Only eleven minutes late, which in view of the many difficulties with which the railways have to contend—

SECOND ACTOR: Exactly. It is a miracle to me how they manage it, with the indifferent fuel allocated to them. (*Taking a piece of coal out of his eye*) Just look at this sample. Practically all slate.

INTERVIEWER: And what about you? No, not the lady with blood running down her face. You, sir, with the cobwebs on your hat. Did you find the compartment clean and well heated?

THIRD ACTOR: Clean! My dear sir, you could have eaten your sandwiches off the floor. In fact, owing to the well-deserved popularity of this service, that is exactly what I did. As to the heating arrangements, an occasional breakdown in the circulatory system is unavoidable. But I happen to know that British Railways are leaving no stone unturned—

A VOICE: There was a rat under my seat which had plainly died of cold.

INTERVIEWER: One at a time, please. Now, madam, perhaps you will give us the woman's point of view?

ACTRESS: Speaking as a housewife, I know how difficult it is to keep upholstery and curtainings fresh and dainty.

It is all very well for men to complain, but if they will put their dirty boots on the seats what can British Railways do? In my opinion we lead the world, and I am not ashamed to say so.

INTERVIEWER: Thank you. I am sure that many housewives will endorse what that lady has just said. Now, about stations. I wonder if somebody—perhaps the gentleman over there in the fur boots and Balacava would care to say a few words.

FOURTH ACTOR: I know: that allegations of dirt, decay, darkness, chipped teacups and mismanagement have from time to time been brought against the railway stations of this country. It is necessary to preserve a sense of proportion. The mere fact that many of our stations have remained unaltered for upwards of a hundred years proves that our railway pioneers builded better than they knew. None the less, British Railways are constantly alert to the possibilities of improvement. Only recently, porters' barrows at a number of main-line termini have been painted green, and now, one hears, there is a scheme on foot to lower the openings in the protective screens at booking-offices to mouth level. Unresting, and, if I may say so without blasphemy, unheating—

A VOICE: I queued for an hour and a quarter—

FIFTH, SIXTH, SEVENTH and EIGHTH ACTORS (*loudly*): What about a move to the buffet, chaps, for a cup of hot, strong coffee?

THE REST: A scrumptious plan! They say the teaspoons have been unchained, and lighting is by gas throughout.

All shuffle off towards barrier. Cut to buffet, showing sixteen actors in queue. They rub their hands eagerly, while a comely barmaid wipes beer-stains off packets of cigarettes.

ACTOR AT HEAD OF QUEUE: Now boys, who's for a sandwich? Every bit of food here is untouched by human hands, you know.

A VOICE: It can remain so, as far as I am concerned.

INTERVIEWER: Who said that? We cannot have these constant interruptions.

CHORUS OF ACTORS: Some unscripted
blackleg, if you ask us.

INTERVIEWER: After him then, boys! Kill him! It's my belief the man's a bona fide passenger.

Chase. Wheels revolving. Connecting-rods going up and down. Hitchcock touches. Imaginative use of signal gantries, communication cords, comic old porters, etc. Finally, clouds of steam from British Railways standard mixed passenger traffic 2-cylinder 4-6-2 "Britannia" class locomotive dissolve to reveal close-up of Mr. Brebner saying a few words about fair play.



"Talk about the best night defence in the world!"

If You Have Tears

Yet another inquiry into the shadowland of Britain's social underworld, exposing grim facts which must shock and shame. Conducted without fear or favour, at the usual feature-article rates...

I FOUND Sheila in a Dulwich back garden, lying glassy-eyed in her pram, a heavy balloon clenched between her baby gums. On it was written: "The next-door baby is crying again. HER Mummy does not know about the new irritation-free KUMFI-TOT KIDDIBREEKS."

Sheila is but eleven months old, and is only one of countless British children forced, by greedy parents and unscrupulous business men, into the sordid and soul-destroying advertising traffic. To-day it is "Kiddibreeks," to-morrow "Wilmerson's Windipuff," next week "Smoley's Kittispray Keeps Pussy Perky."

STARTING

In a short year or two Sheila will be hard at work, like chubby Robin Fooney, whom I found in a Welwyn Garden City home chalking on his nursery wall: "Daddy says you cannot beat SPICE-O'-LIFE BATTERIES for starting on cold mornings. See your local SPICE-O'-LIFE stockist to-day!" His little fingers were stiff from holding the crayons, and his little face green from eating them.

These luckless kiddies, who should

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

be exulting in childhood's inviolable heritage of games and laughter, are growing old before their time, thrust uncomprehending into the maelstrom of commerce, their innocence offered up on the black altar of publicity.

I interviewed twin boy and girl Derek and Felicity in a block of Knightsbridge flats. Their only toys were stacks of Cellophane-wrapped cereal packets and some tins of dog-food. They were unable to give their full names or telephone numbers, but instead repeated dully, in reply to my questions, "There's nothing to touch GOOBY'S OLD-FASHIONED EXTRACT for building up us toddlers after a 'go' of chicken-pox, measles, mumps, whooping-cough or other childish ailments."

When I asked which, if any, of these complaints they were recovering from they replied in mechanical, chanting voices, husky with repetition, "The doctor says GOOBY'S for Growing Nippers." I believe that they had no idea of the meaning of what they were saying.

Throughout the length and breadth of this fair-seeming country of ours I

found the same small, pathetic pawns in the great, brutal game of industry. As the years creep by, years which have never known the excitement of "The Three Bears" or "Peter Rabbit" but only the staling repertory of "Mummy's in love with her LIFT-A-LID Dust-bin," "Healthy teeth are TROOWHITE'S Sacred Trust" and "You never see My Daddy with concertina stockings since I told him about GRIPU GARTERS," this deadly brain-fodder takes its inevitable toll of the child's character and temperament.

At the age of seven he or she falls an easy victim to a disease which medical specialists in childish diseases call "P.O.C.," or "Pride of Commodity."

HORRID RAT-TAILS

At first the P.O.C. subject is content to extol the virtues of his or her own possessions. "My Bike is a BETTABIKE. BETTABIKES are the Best Bikes"; or "Everyone's jealous of my rain-defying SUPERBOOTS (for Good Little Girls Only!)." Later the obsession exchanges smug satisfaction for petulant covetousness, with periods of pointing and rudeness. "Shirley's Hair is like Satin, 'cos her Mummy washes it morning and night with ANGELSUDS, thus preserving its natural sheen and breath-taking lustre. Why is my hair all horrid rat-tails when a Double Jumbo-Size ANGELSUDS is only 1/4d. (tax paid)?" Or "I am the only boy in the percussion band who is not kept regular with GRANNY MOGSHAW'S GRUEL (it builds sturdy legs)."

It was in the council-house home of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Whelkes that I saw the greed and ignorance of parents recoiling with poetic justice on their own heads. The family were at breakfast when I arrived. I saw at once that Michael (seven) and Patricia (eight) were both advanced P.O.C. cases. As Mr. Whelkes rose from the table and kissed Mrs. Whelkes good-bye Michael waved his spoon and cried: "No cut chins or sore, inflamed cheeks with POTBURY'S POST-SHAVE TANG-FAST ASTRINGENT LOTION IN HANDY EASY-SPRAY IMITATION CUT-GLASS ATOMISER." Mr. Whelkes hurriedly dabbed



"No, he doesn't talk."

at his oozing chin with a napkin. "Here is your brief-case, dear," said Mrs. Whelkes, handing him a worn leatherette bag. Patricia intoned shrilly: "No real business executive would own anything but a PARKLEY-PROUST PIG-SKIN PERFECTION WITH DOUBLE-ACTION TWIN-SNAP LOCK AND DETACHABLE DOCUMENT DIVISION."

"DADDY'S TROUSERS"

"Good-bye, children," said Mr. Whelkes, making for the door. But they had barred his way, and he raised a hand in an involuntary gesture as if to ward off what was clearly an established morning barrage. "BAGWOOD'S BOTTLE BEANS are the Only Beans," yelled Michael stridently. "Boys need BAGWOOD'S!" "Freda's Mummy is her Old Sweet Self since she got her EVERYSPEK HOUSEHOLD BRUSH SET," shouted Patricia, and added peremptorily, "Make my Mummy Happy Too!" Mrs. Whelkes protested weakly, "Children, children."

As Mr. Whelkes made his escape the two little unfortunates scampered screaming to the window. "Why start the day in a rush? NEVERFAYLE ALARMS add years to your life." "My Mummy will be ironing all day, but Elsie's Mummy leaves it all to AUTO-PRESS." "Coo, see how Daddy's trousers shine! I 'spect he doesn't know about FURBISH, 9d. and 1/3d."

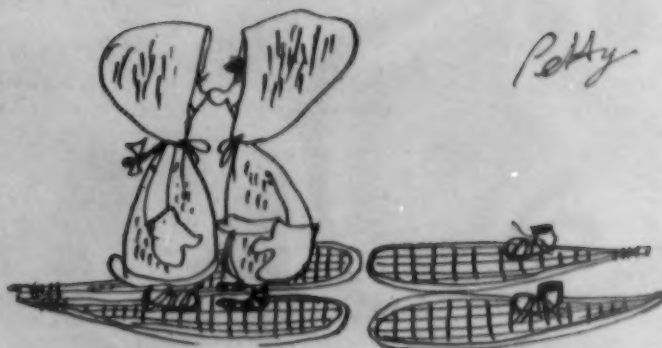
"Children," repeated Mrs. Whelkes, dashing a wisp of hair from her eyes. "What do you say to a visitor?"

"Why look old," said Patricia, pointing at my head with an EEZISLICE bread-knife, "when you can halve your age with COLOURS (recommended by Leading Trichologists)?" And Michael added, taking up an armful of plumbing pamphlets and leading the way from the room, "In gaily-shaped bottles, an asset to your bathroom-cabinet or shelf." (Next week: The Boy Who Killed to Get His Daddy a KING TOM Greenhouse)

"It is also observed that you are ordering 66 bottles of milk each day during the term period although there apparently have only been 66 children on the school register during the school term and perhaps you will let me have some further explanation."

Letter to a headmaster from the Milk Division, Ministry of Food

Such as what?



Helicon, Glorious Helicon

Troubadours will visit inns this summer as part of the Devon Festival of the Arts.

I WISH I were a troubadour,
A poet pure and self-confessed,
Engaged at great expense to tour
The tourist centres of the west.
Under his guarantee he gives
Fourteen performances a day.
Though wedded to his art, he lives
On County Council pay.

*Sing Devon is heaven, and Drake's gone west,
And Widecombe's fair but beer is best,
And the ballad, the jolly ballad, is all my eye.*

Oh gaily goes the troubadour
To culturise the crowd from stock
Or entertain the vavasour
With verses improvised *ad hoc*.
He has not found an audience yet,
And understandably exults
In freedom from the need to get
His payments by results.

*Sing squab-pie, junket and cider-brew,
And es fay, and the same to you,
And Devon is heaven, and Drake's gone west,
And Widecombe's fair, but beer is best,
And the ballad, the jolly ballad, is all my eye.*

For culture carries rich rewards
As straight professional technique,
And local culture tends towards
The esoteric and antique:
The rich red earth is fruitful stuff
And should persuade the troubadour
That if he plugs the past enough
His future is secure.

*Sing combe and tor, green valley and lane,
And piskies' revel, and come again,
And squab-pie, junket and cider-brew,
And es fay, and the same to you,
And Devon is heaven, and Drake's gone west,
And Widecombe's fair, but beer is best,
And the ballad, the jolly ballad, is all my eye.*

P. M. HUBBARD



"This where the party is?"



Austerity the Enterprise Way

DURING the last war Bernard Shaw offered to meet Britain's armaments budget by a trifling adjustment in the alphabet. He maintained that the dropping of a few superfluous vowels would save enough labour, breath, ink, metal, paint and paper to lick the Germans and liquidate the National Debt.

Shaw wasn't the first philosopher to appreciate the value of apparently minor economies. There was the man who stalked into the head office of the old L.N.E.R. with a scheme calculated to save the company tens of thousands a year: "Everybody knows you run a railway," he told the startled directors, "so why not eliminate the R and call yourselves the L.N.E.?"

And Shaw wasn't the last homespun do-gooder to prescribe painless nostrums for our financial ailments. At this moment the newspapers are busy advising us how to "knock" inflation, how to bring down the price of tea, how to rub Mr. Rising Price's nose in the dust. A single page of the *News Chronicle* contains these headlines—"Find those Cheaper Cuts," "Check the Prices on all those Tins," "This Pot knocks a Third off your Tea Bill." We are told to eat less meat, fewer eggs, biscuits and oranges, and to drink less tea and coffee: if we carry out instructions prices will tumble.

Well, yes, of course they will. And when they've tumbled sufficiently and we are allowed to buy again, those "damn ridiculous" prices will promptly sneak back again up to their perches. That's something the newspaper economists omit to mention. I should be much more grateful to the newspapers for their "reduce-the-cost-of-living" campaign if they directed their propaganda at people in other countries, the very people whose increased consumption has made British prices rocket. Why not tell the Tunisians who now swill one and a third cups of tea per day (compared with our nearly five and a fifth), to cut out that one for the pot? And why not advise the Americans, who stupefy themselves with one quarter of a cup per person per day,

that a pleasant infusion can be made from dried mulberry and dandelion?

But there's another, far more serious, point. The Fourth Estate may be pretty powerful, but I can't somehow see the rest of industry and commerce knuckling under and accepting its propaganda without a struggle. When the Press says "Buy less tea" it does not necessarily mean "Buy less tea and save pennies to spend on newspapers," but the tea merchants may take the less charitable view, especially if they feel (as I do) that there is a likelihood of some increase in the price of certain newspapers.



Beastly Language

THE longer I farm the more certain I become that animals are articulate. I suppose what we mean by the phrase "our dumb friends" is that they don't speak English.

It is some years now since we ploughed with a team of horses, but I can still remember watching the shire mares converse as they plodded up the furrow, or stood switching their tails while the man adjusted the coulter. If they were not communicating, why did they put their heads together? And what would have made one of the horses look so bored but the opinions expressed by the other? It's true I could not hear any words, but that is not proof that they have no language. For, as everybody knows, we can only hear certain sound frequencies, and are deaf to many notes which a dog or a bird can hear with ease.

Such speculations have long intrigued me, and I recently embarked on a series of experiments to investigate whether animals have a language or not. I decided to concentrate on pigs because, if you exclude rats, they are easily the most intelligent of domestic animals.

There was another reason for my choice: I had an uncle staying on the farm at the time, and I noticed that, like most of our guests, he was much more

talkative before a meal than after he had gorged his fill. As I surveyed his recumbent figure on the opposite side of the hearth, with his unread newspaper rising to the rhythm of his snores, it occurred to me that language was primarily an expression of hunger, and that if I wanted to discover how articulate pigs could be, I should be advised to feed them less regularly.

Accordingly, I decided to try this experiment on a saddlebacked porker, which I separated from the litter and isolated in a pen. Then with true scientific detachment I fed the litter and kept the solitary pig hungry. As expected, the rest were silent, it was horribly articulate. But to what degree did this noise constitute a language? I decided that the only distinction between a noise and a language is that in the latter certain sounds become identified with specific ideas, and therefore if the pig used a language these identical sounds would be repeated on a similar occasion.

The next morning I fed all the pigs, including the guinea-pig. For I didn't want to starve it entirely, knowing that if I heightened its emotion or need I could hardly expect repetition. So I allowed two days to elapse during which I fed them all quite normally. Then I repeated the experiment and recorded the angry pig's statement of complaint on a tape. To the uninitiated ear it sounds like a soprano aria played backwards. But I have now made three separate recordings under identical circumstances. Listening to them, I have discovered that the noises are repeated, and do constitute an undiscovered language. Naturally, I have hastily abandoned these foolish experiments. It's quite enough for me to have to converse with my uncle.

RONALD DUNCAN



Monday, February 21

Disconcerted, perhaps, by the wreck of Dr. HILL last time Food questions came up, the House of Commons: Hands Across the Channel Government played the Minister himself this time, and Mr. HEATHCOAT-AMORY's cheerful urbanity kept the tea-party clean rather impressively. There were passing references to the ubiquity of scrag-ends under Socialism and, just once, to the rate at which the cost of living had gone up under the late administration; but the only event remotely resembling a scene was the result of excessive complacency on the part of Mr. NABARRO:

Mr. NABARRO (*on a point of order*): Is it not the fact that the essence of a successful supplementary question should be that the Member knows the answer before he puts it?

THE SPEAKER: The essence of a successful supplementary question is that it should be short.

[Collapse of hon. Member for Kidderminster.]

There was a slight breeze later, however, when Mr. SELWYN LLOYD took his turn to keep the pass against the vociferous armament experts, Messrs. WYATT, SHINWELL and WIGG. Because Mr. LLOYD declined to say whether or not our two-seater night-fighters were "better" than the American F86D, Mr. WIGG rounded on him thus: "If the Minister cannot make the comparison, why was the dishonest statement made in the White Paper that our night-fighter defences were better than anywhere else in the world?" Challenged, he withdrew "dishonest" and substituted "grossly misleading." Mr. LLOYD, who was admirably positive about the merits of our night defences, and indeed about everything else, did not bat an eyelid.

Until seven o'clock, the House debated the Government motion approving the agreement linking the U.K. and the European Coal and Steel Community, which found favour on both sides, and with the Liberals too for good measure. (No one spoke for the SILVERMAN Socialists.) Two Conservatives, Mr. AUBREY JONES and Major LEGGE-BOURKE, expressed their ingrained suspicion of supra-national authorities, but the motion was passed without a division. Mr. ROBENS, who had already voiced his side's delight in the Iron and Steel Community, rose again on the motion for the adjournment to voice their approval of the Council of Europe, but found a less degree of approval. Lord JOHN HOPE, winding-up for the Government, showed himself as accomplished a master of the cliché as any of his colleagues at the Foreign Office.

Tuesday, February 22

It was extraordinary how many horror-comics found their way into the Chamber for the debate on Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE's little *ad hoc* Bill. Mr. HERBERT MORRISON skimmed through a little pile and handed them on to Sir FRANK SOSKICE; Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE himself held a small collection which was later tucked out of sight among the feet of the Parliamentary Private Secretaries; Sir HUGH LINSTEAD spread out a batch upon the bench beside him; Miss HERBISON had a bunch; Mr. RANKIN, perhaps unaware what kind of horror was to be debated, took the opportunity to read a publication called *True Love*.

The Home Secretary must have been disappointed at the unfriendly reception given to a Bill he has been urged from so many quarters to bring in; for hardly



Mr. Peter Thorneycroft

a voice was raised in its support. Once Sir FRANK SOSKICE had formally promised it the Opposition's blessing, few were found to approve. The bill was, it seemed, ill-worded, haphazard, inadequate; it perpetuated the principle of Lord Chief Justice Cockburn's judgment of 1868, which nobody wanted; it was even, according to Mr. MICHAEL FOOT, who made by far the most brilliant speech of the day, aimed at the wrong target and should rather have sought to bring down the *Daily Mirror*, the *Weekend Mail*, *Reynolds* and the *Sunday Dispatch*.

Good or bad, however, the House gave the bill a Second Reading; but it may be expected to undergo considerable change in committee.

Having dealt with this main item on their programme, the House turned to the comparatively healthy subject of sewerage.

Wednesday, February 23

Led by Mr. JOHN DUGDALE, the Opposition displayed a sudden tinge of imperialism over the impending transfer to the Ethiopians of certain territories in Somaliland. It was not enough for them that, as Mr. LENNOX-BOYD sympathetically explained, the transfer was

House of Commons:
Scots v. Somalis



Mr. Michael Foot

inevitable under our treaty with the Ethiopians; nor that the grazing rights of the Somalis were safeguarded by our agreement with the Lion of Judah; nor that the situation had already been explained to a deputation of the Somali sheikhs affected; nor that the reserved territories were Ethiopian anyway. The Empire was breaking up, and nothing would satisfy Mr. DUGDALE but an immediate adjournment of the House.

Sorry, said the Speaker; there's a statement to be made about Scotland. So the Somalis had to wait while Scottish Members bombarded Mr. HENDERSON STEWART with questions about such matters as the cost of airborne fodder. This gave the Speaker time to marshal his thoughts and turn down Mr. DUGDALE's request as persuasively as possible.

Thursday, February 24

A good mark for Mr. WATKINSON, who took the Ministry of Labour's questions, in the continued absence of Sir WALTER MONCKTON, with praiseworthy coolness, clarity, courtesy and nicely-controlled judgment.

The Opposition were delighted by Mr. BUTLER's announcements about the bank rate and hire-purchase restrictions, greeting them, for some reason, with cries of "Tea!" and sardonic references

Member, he could be expected to speak about with authority; and he cast his vote in favour of the monopolists. After that it would have been easy for the Government to claim that intimate knowledge revealed that all the monopolies and price-rings were equally harmless; but as it happened, they sided with the commission against the calico printers, thus decking themselves in a white sheet of purity that showed up the Opposition's garment as decidedly maculate. The Liberals, at any rate—always great ones for purity—saw the point and announced their intention to switch their votes. Mr. THORNEYCROFT wound up the debate as well as launching it, his lively, flamboyant manner earning him a descent of Ministerial cheers with every other sentence.

So perhaps we shall now see an immediate fall in the price of tyres, electric-light bulbs, TV tubes, and so on.

to the current Conservative poster campaign. But the Chancellor took it all with his usual beaming smile.

Mr. HAROLD WILSON led the Labour attack on the Government's progress, or lack of it, in dealing with monopolies. There was more in what he said than Mr. THORNEYCROFT, in his opening rhetorical fanfare, made out ("The Socialist attitude is now absolutely clear; it is to strengthen the commission, but to act in advance of its recommendations, and if on any occasion they put in a report which is unpopular or difficult, to ignore it"); but his case was very much weakened by his attitude over the calico printers. Here was the one investigation that, as a Lancashire

Friday, February 25

It was Labour's turn to stay away when Sir WAVELL WAKEFIELD introduced his bill to find new sources of pilots for civil aircraft; though Mr. HUDSON loomed attentively over the proceedings for a time in case the House should so quickly dispatch not only this motion but the two following, and come to the Second Reading of the Airports Licensing Bill. Sir WAVELL's bill attracted sympathy from both sides, and Mr. FRANK BESWICK made one of the notably sound speeches he always produces when the interests of civil flying are concerned. B. A. YOUNG

House of Commons:
Civil Air Pilots



BOOKING OFFICE

The Table in a Roar

ONE way of stealing up on the past is to listen to its laughter. To approach it only via its institutions or æconomy or monuments is to be too ascetic. Mark Lemon, *Punch's* Editor for its first thirty years, produced a very popular compilation called *The Jest Book*, now chiefly remembered for Keene's illustration on the title page. This is a collection of jokes in no discoverable order, and as one dips into it Westminster Hall and Trinity College, Dublin, and Holland House and Curran and George Selwyn and Sidney Smith and Lord Mansfield begin to live, not publicly but privately. Counsel score off witnesses: impertinent collegians are put down by irascible scholars: rustic chawbacons are donkeys or foxes.

The *Jests* come mainly from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The dinner candles shine on the panelling, and the footmen are torn betwixt yawns and giggles that will earn them a rating as a gouty voice begins "Sheridan once said a good thing anent . . ." It is surprising that the first edition was as late as 1864. The edition I have been dipping into is 1888 and it needs some mental readjustment to understand how the jokes can have sparkled, as jokes, in the year of the Parnell Commission and *Plain Tales from the Hills*. It is also difficult to understand how it was used in practice. Were readings from it interposed with warblings at the piano in Victorian drawing-rooms? Hepzibah in her watered silk has just concluded one of Tom Moore's ditties when the Curate, asking his Rector's permission with a raised eyebrow, reads out: "MDCLXXVIII.—THE SALIC LAW is a most sensible and valuable law, banishing gallantry and chivalry from Cabinets, and preventing the amiable antics of grave statesmen." To demands for an encore he accedes with "MDLXXXIV.—BYRON LIBELLOUS. The conversation at Holland House turning on first love, Thomas Moore compared it to a potatoe because 'it shoots from the eyes.' 'Or rather,' exclaimed Lord Byron, 'because it becomes less by pairing.'"

Even if conviviality in the home could manage without *The Jest Book*, it

must have been indispensable to the Solitaires who brooded in profile at waterfalls and ignored the tide of industrialism as it crept towards them. Their pangs would have been much assuaged when they joined with Echo in reciting: "CCCLXXXV.—SIMPLICITY OF THE LEARNED PORSON. The great scholar had a horror of the east-wind; and Tom Sheridan once kept him prisoner in the house for a fortnight by fixing the weathercock in that direction."



The world in which the *Jests* were made and the world in which they were consumed are alike only partially recoverable. There is something baffling about many of Lemon's pages, e.g. "CXL.—A CABAL. The attempt to run over the King of the French with a cab, looked like a conspiracy to overturn monarchy by a common-wheel." Presumably this refers to Louis Philippe, the bourgeois monarch who used to wander about Paris carrying an umbrella. It is unlikely to refer to a King of the *Ancien Régime*: from what I remember of the cabs at Versailles they would have been far too easy to dodge.

Sometimes the fog is complete and our separation from the past absolute: "CCCXIII.—QUITE TRUE. AVARICE is criminal poverty." What can this mean and at what audience was Lemon aiming it? If ever the warning "Smile when you say that" were needed it would be when launching QUITE TRUE. More

enjoyable are the anecdotes which give us the feeling that we are getting a glimpse of an alien but accessible world, which make us feel that if we had read just a little more we should understand so much. I cannot explain DXV.—WALPOLIANA, but I am sure I should chuckle "Of course" if anyone explained it to me. It is a conversation piece: "Walpole was plagued one morning with that oaf of unlicked antiquity, Prideaux, and his great boy. He talked through all Italy, and everything in all Italy. Upon mentioning Stosch, Walpole asked if he had seen his collection. He replied, very few of his things, for he did not like his company; that he never heard so much *heathenish* talk in his days. Walpole inquired what it was, and found that Stosch had one day said before him, *that the soul was only a little glue.*"

Some of the characters in *The Jest Book* are famous already, like Melbourne and Bubb Doddington and Brougham; some are forgotten and live only because they once left an opening for a riposte or found the right words themselves. They appear for a moment and then return to the shades—the toping bookseller who presented a cheque at the banking-house of Sir William Curtis, Lundy Foot, "the celebrated Irish tobacconist," or Hatton, who was a considerable favourite at the Haymarket in the part of Jack Junk and performed Barbarossa at Gosport. *The Jest Book* world is a world of vivid fragments and no ingenuity can fit the pieces together into a convincing whole. The past is more like that than we will admit. It includes incidents so remote from our own experience that they can be comfortably brought under such headings as MAD QUAKERS, CARROTS CLASSICALLY CONSIDERED and TEMPERANCE CRUETS, and it was so full of humour that this pocket-selection of the cream of it needs a sixteen-page index.

R. G. G. PRICE

A Boy's Memories

The Worcester Account. S. N. Behrman.
Hamish Hamilton, 12/6

Here is an entertaining and most agreeably readable record of nightly struggles with Malach Hamoves, the Angel of Death, of civil wars for leadership of a local synagogue, of Days of

Atonement tense with the atmosphere of a murder trial, of a gross fellow who actually carried an umbrella on the Sabbath.

Presented without much attempt at arrangement and beset with quick surprises, these all-Jewish reminiscences are based on recurring dreams and half-buried childish imaginings, their background being a range of massive volumes of the Talmud mysteriously smuggled out of Russia by a Lithuanian rabbi refugee, the writer's father, whose entire energies even in Worcester, Mass., were absorbed in traditional ritual observances black with heathenism.

Mr. Behrman is realizing how as a boy he emerged from a thick cloud of mediaevalism under the paradoxically wise tuition of an insane companion and in an environment where canoeing, baseball and mild flirtations clashed with the perpetual appeasement of a vengeful deity. His mother to the end of her life had no language but Yiddish. Before she died he had forgotten it.

C. C. P.

Jean Cocteau. Margaret Crosland. *Peter Nevill*, 15/-

The general line of Miss Crosland's book is that there is a "Cocteau legend" which should be forgotten, while M. Jean Cocteau himself is built up into a great dramatist and film producer. The trouble is that if the legend is removed comparatively little remains. For those who want to know what Cocteau's career in the theatre and cinema has been this is a sober, and no doubt accurate, narrative, but it does leave the reader with a feeling that Cocteau has spent most of his time as a distinguished dramatist, a near-saint, doing his best for others, and seeking occasional relaxation in a tea-shop.

Perhaps that is unjust to Miss Crosland! But surely if M. Cocteau has any importance at all, it is as a minor, malicious, entirely frivolous and in many ways admirable manifestation of the movement of "modern art." More might have been said of his social contacts and his drawings, for example. He was the centre of a number of very amusing and brilliant people, some of whom certainly gave a rather different picture of him from that conveyed here. However, some account in English of this long notable French figure is welcome, and the brutal crack that designated him "*Le Veuf sur le Toit*" is now deservedly on record.

A. P.

Victorian Sidelights. A. M. W. Stirling. *Benn*, 21/-

This book has been put together from the disjointed papers and reminiscences left by Mrs. Adams-Acton, the wife of the Victorian portrait sculptor. Apparently the scribbled and dictated notes were very confused, and retelling in clearer but less individual language was inevitable. Mrs. Adams-Acton was a hostess of great vitality and a strenuous



"And now the jackpot question—name in order the twenty-one French Prime Ministers since the war?"

parent, as well as being a best-selling novelist and a playwright. She once walked from London to Scotland with her six children, a nursemaid pushing a gigantic perambulator with the smaller children and the luggage.

She knew everybody in the fashionable Art world and had some connections with the Court. There is some interesting stuff about Manning, George Eliot and the St. John's Wood Group. The material is a bit thin, though if you like the period there are many pleasant glimpses of it and there is an occasional bit of good gossip: nobody could sing a love-song like Gladstone, the 11th Duke of Hamilton may have been murdered by Louis Napoleon, and George Moore and Curzon were once rivals for the affections of John Oliver Hobbes.

R. G. G. P.

Their Name Liveth. Methuen, 15/-

Contrasting stone and lawn must be a very satisfying medium for a landscape architect to work in; at any rate this second volume about the work of the Imperial War Graves Commission makes it seem so, and the official uniformity of the headstones has enabled the cemetery designers to achieve extremely moving effects and to avoid the haphazardness that so often gives God's acre the look of an enormous outdoor attic. The book is very well produced, and the photographs varied and excellent.

P. D.



AT THE PLAY

Wonderful Town (PRINCES)

MORE happened in a week to the two sisters in *Wonderful Town* than would have come the way of Chekhov's trio in a thousand years. Arriving in New York in the 'thirties to

earn their living, one as an actress, the other as a writer, they settled in a basement in Greenwich Village and immediately began to learn about the curious habits of a great city.

This new musical is based on the straight play *My Sister Eileen*, the book being by the same authors, JOSEPH FIELDS and JEROME CHODOROV, who took their theme in the first place from the stories of RUTH MCKENNEY. In the process of becoming a musical most plots are diluted, but here even the connecting links have suffered, so that a good deal of the evening is pretty close to revue. Very little attempt is made at any dramatic tightening. Vitality and simple charm are the staples, but although one welcomes this further departure from the adolescent neuroses in which American musicals wallowed a few years ago, something more is needed. Mainly, I think, a male comedian good enough to match the varied and altogether delightful performance of PAT KIRKWOOD, who works tirelessly to provide most of the laughs.

She is cast, rather absurdly, as the plain sister who drops all her catches in the game of love, until finally she wins the affection of a good but soporific editor with a distressing addiction to solemn song (remembering how funny DENNIS BOWEN was as Mr. Dumby in *After the Ball*, it was sad to see him so heavily handicapped). None of this daunts her, however, and she attacks the part with a raciness and verve seen at their best in the charades where she acts the purplest passages in the frightful short stories with which Sister Ruth is bombarding the magazines of New York. And in the last scene, when she and Sister Eileen electrify a night-club with a song called "Wrong Note Rag" which obviously we shall all soon be singing in our baths, *Wonderful Town* reaches late in the day a pitch of excitement almost leading one to forget its earlier slownesses and its habit of depending less on plot than on a mass of undefined characters simply drifting in and out.

Eileen, a dumb blonde and a magnet to men, is played agreeably with a kind of teddy-bear artlessness by SHANI WALLIS, who shone in *Call Me Madam*, and SIDNEY JAMES brightens the village as a battered football coach surviving in between seasons by ironing its underwear. More attention has been paid to the dialogue than is usual in this sort of thing; now and then a line flashes sharply. The décor is frankly dull. What stands out in a mixed evening is the comic drive of Miss KIRKWOOD, the exuberance and precision of the chorus, which RICHARD BIRD has handled splendidly, and the music of LEONARD BERNSTEIN.

This seems to me, an innocent in such matters, to be both mathematically interesting and commendably unglutinous. It fizzies with esoteric pyrotechnics, and it can also provide a good tune. But



Eileen—SHANI WALLIS

Ruth—PAT KIRKWOOD

[Wonderful Town

a little cottonwool in the ears wouldn't be amiss, for there is enough sheer sound to supply two or three wonderful towns.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)
Serious Charge (Garrick—23/2/55), a mental thriller neatly put together, and *Sailor Beware!* (Strand—23/2/55), a funny and terrifying study of a tyrant tamed by her son-in-law. Both new plays, to cheer the worst season for years.

ERIC KEOWN



AT THE BALLET

Antonio and His Spanish Ballet
 (PALACE)—*Le Lac des Cygnes*
 (COVENT GARDEN)

THE rapture which greeted ANTONIO and his Spanish Ballet at the Palace Theatre on the opening night of their season, and the immense virtuosity and high spirits by which it was justified, converted the occasion with mounting fervour into an exultant *fiesta*. Though no hats were thrown on the stage it was borne to eye and ear that snow-nipped British phlegm had been potently laced with warm Iberian blood. Audience participation could scarcely have gone farther. Even after the final encores and

curtain calls, with the conductor making his bow, the end of the excitement was not in sight. The curtain rose again and, with house lights fully on, the company took its reluctant leave with individual and collective capers which had the spontaneity of exuberant improvisation.

Between whiles there had been a rising crescendo of acclaim for CARMEN ROJAS, who, on her first appearance, endured a traditional *taranto* with well-judged grotesquerie; and for PACO RUIZ, a virile young dancer ranking second to the pre-eminent ANTONIO, for whose first appearing we had to wait until the penultimate item of the first half of the programme. Along with ANTONIO MAIRENA, the well-proved Flamenco singer, and the guitarists, ANTONIO brought proceedings momentarily to a standstill. Later he touched the highest point of accomplishment in the renowned and dazzling *Zapateado*. The tiny taps and tremors of his heel in the *pp.* passages seemed more superbly under artistic control than ever.

ROSITA SEGOVIA is now an established favourite in London and she again danced the leading part in the Basque Dances, which include the famous feat of alighting in full career on the rim of a wine-glass without disturbing its

contents. The company has now been enlarged to twenty and strengthened with new talent which, though it does not provide ballet in the strict sense of the word, lifts the traditional *ensembles* to a higher standard of polish than formerly.

Aspirants to the highest honours in classical ballet must inevitably come to the exacting test of the dual rôle of Odette-Odile in *Swan Lake*. SVETLANA BERIOSOVA had already shown that her talent and personality were perfectly fitted for the gentle character of the swan of Act II. But what would she make of the sinister radiance of the wicked impostor? Very sensibly Miss BERIOSOVA did not attempt to emulate the hard brilliance with which the Misses Fonteyn and Grey dazzle the Prince. Her Black Swan is not a glittering adventuress but a subtly seductive charmer whose half-smile gives the merest hint of evil purpose. Miss BERIOSOVA has graduated as *ballerina* with high honours. Another young dancer on the way up is evidently ANYA LINDEN, who gave a captivating account of herself in a small part.

C. B. MORTLOCK



AT THE OPERA

Bohème—*La Traviata*
 Manon (COVENT GARDEN)

OF these performances the first two were on routine as distinct from invitation nights. It is germane to know how the repertory company behaves when nobody's looking.

Bohème was challenging for the meditative tempi of REGINALD GOODALL. There were moments when he made Puccini sound like Mahler (there's no denying the affinity, blasphemous as it may seem to some Mahlerians), with a luxury and tenderness in the scoring which just-another-job conductors hopelessly miss or never sense. In *Manon*, again, he loitered with intent, as the charge sheets say. There were jet mentalities out in front who swore under their breath. GOODALL does not, I hope, need their suffrages.

I wager there is no repertory house in Europe with a more radiantly sung Mimi than ELSIE MORRISON's. English as a Tudor rose, agreed. But what Murger reader ever regarded Mimi as Italian? Rodolfo, a youngster of some breeding as I imagine him, was turned by JAMES JOHNSTON into a half-brother of Jack, the blunt, handy, paid-up trade unionist of *The Midsummer Marriage*. "I want a separation from Mimi," he sang in act three. This cherished line from the old Percy Pinkerton translation suggested more than ever, as Mr. JOHNSTON delivered it, that Rodolfo was shouldering his truculent way into the Elephant and Castle offices of the Poor Persons' Legal Aid Society, resolved to have the law of her or get drunk in the attempt.

For *La Traviata* I had an unaccustomed seat in the balcony tier over the orchestra pit (horns and woodwind end).

Under JOHN PRITCHARD's unimpassioned beat the score unwound elegantly and, from where I sat, with uncommon clarity: the orchestra's *tutti* shudders in the death scene were so delectably solid that I wanted to pick them up and take them home. Alas, there was no dodging the words. JESS WALTERS (strongly melodious whether as Germont Père, Des Grieux Père or Marcel) was so upset by the East Lynne flummery of his translated lines (e.g. "I can only beg and pray of you, Have mercy on a father's shame") that in the third act finale he flew for sanity to the original and was plainly heard, against seven other soloists, chorus and orchestra, singing "... *ppur crudele tacer dovrò*."

In *Ah fors' e lui* the Violetta, WILMA LIPP, who comes from Vienna, placed her high notes deftly but trilled all too audibly about visions of joy, delight and repchah. JOHN LANIGAN looked more like a kindly county cricketer than Alfredo. But he came into his own two nights later as the younger Des Grieux. I do not say his voice is always bar silver, any more than that ADELE LEICH always has the power and top quality for Manon. But the two of them sing plausibly, to say the least; and they took their parts to admiration, as pretty and pathetic a pair of Prévost lovers as we are likely to meet cast of Hollywood. CHARLES REID

AT THE PICTURES

*A Prize of Gold
Seven Samurai*

PROBABLY *A Prize of Gold* (Director: MARK ROBSON) would seem a fairly undistinguished suspense story without the freshening influence of its scene. It is largely a sort of glorified crime-does-not-pay episode; but although its characters are without any real depth, not one is a hackneyed or obvious figure, and all are interesting.

Perhaps "crime does not pay" is an unfortunate phrase to recall, for when you think the thing out it appears that this crime did pay, in its way, enough to satisfy the dominating character concerned. He plainly regards the gaol sentence waiting for him at the end as no more than a temporary annoyance. He (RICHARD WIDMARK) is an American Air Police sergeant in occupied Berlin, and the crime—gold robbery—is softened as much as possible by the clear indication that he has committed it not for selfish reasons but so that a number of German war orphans can start a new life in South America.

Of course there is an attractive young woman in charge of them (MAI ZETTERLING) and it is understood that at the end of his sentence she and he will somehow be happy together, but even so this man is evidently no mercenary villain.

The gold in question is bullion, dragged from a canal in the first sequence and consigned to the Custodian of Ex-Enemy Property in England. The

American sergeant has a British sergeant buddy (GEORGE COLE), and things work out so that they are both detailed to escort the gold on the plane to London, after arranging for a seedy ex-R.A.F. adventurer (NIGEL PATRICK) to be on hand to pilot the plane when they have seized control of it from the original crew.

Not surprisingly, most of their haphazard plans go wrong; but by some obscure and not very probable arrangement with a crooked contact man in London, the money for the orphans is provided even though the gold is given back, one or two of the accomplices are killed, and the lofty-minded leader penitently gives himself up.

There are plenty of improbabilities, one way and another. But the suspense is effective, there are excellent character sketches (notably Mr. PATRICK's—and he and Mr. WIDMARK have some admirably-handled moments of mutual distrust and lack of sympathy), and above all there is the interest of the Berlin scene.

It still seems to me that the conventions of Japanese film-making are too far away from our own to allow of the sort of "losing oneself in the story" that so many average moviegoers demand; but *Seven Samurai* (Director: AKIRA KUROSAWA) comes over as quite an exciting adventure that should please a considerable popular audience. The brutality and violence that some writers have complained of seemed to me not nearly so offensive as such things can be sometimes in Western films (and by "Western" I mean

"Occidental"). In this context they seem muted, further from reality.

Here is a story of a poor village in the sixteenth century that hires seven Samurai, professional warriors, to protect it from bandits. The long film (two and a half hours) begins with the menace of the bandits, shows the engaging of the Samurai one by one, works up to a fighting climax, and ends with the departure of the three surviving Samurai. There is simple boisterous fun as well as excitement, and on another level the picture is constantly interesting as a technical job—not because of the strangeness of the convention but for the imaginative vitality and the visual sense that are the strength of what is expressed in that convention.

The American titles have been criticized. True, there may be an occasional "Oh yeah?"; but more often there are such convincingly Oriental locutions as "I accept because your character fascinates me" or "I was astonished by his gay indifference."

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

A notable new one is *The End of the Affair*, of which more next week. *Umberto D.* continues, and *Carmen Jones* (19/1/55) is having a second London run.

Releases include *Little Fugitive* (9/2/55), which almost anybody should enjoy, and *The Colditz Story* (9/2/55), an entertaining view of the lighter side of p.o.w. life, very well done, and true—so far as it goes. RICHARD MALLETT



Alfie Stratton—DONALD WOLFELT

Joe Lawrence—RICHARD WIDMARK

Brian—NIGEL PATRICK

Roger—GEORGE COLE

[A Prize of Gold



ON THE AIR

In and Out of the News

JUDGED purely by the frequency with which it is switched on, television's "News and Newsreel" must be just about the most popular item on the air after sound radio's nine-o'clock "News." And this is as it should be. Viewers have a right to expect a daily ration of pictorial comment on matters of public interest, a reliable telefilm news service.

But judged by the number of occasions when it fails to deliver the goods, when it strangles liveliness and topicality by its rigid, stuffy approach, "News and Newsreel" can only be accounted a lamentable failure. Viewers have been patient: many months have passed since this key programme suffered reconstruction at the hands of Mr. Tahu Hole and his team, and there is still no sign that repairs to the first draft, which revealed glaring weaknesses, are under consideration.

Let me make clear that viewers do not expect the impossible. Television cannot hope to comment pictorially on "big news," the sensations and dramatic developments that appear in the day's headlines. No one expects scoops. The cameramen can never be mobile enough or prescient enough to be on the spot when revolutions break out or buildings burst into flames. Nor do we expect "News and Newsreel" to provide a summary of current affairs as complete and topical as that presented by the Press or by sound radio. What we do expect are good moving pictures of the more illuminating of what *The Times* calls "To-day's Arrangements," of the important, predictable and scheduled events of politics, the arts and sport, of social



"Peep Show"

history in the making and natural phenomena. And it matters little if the pictures reach our screens a day or so late. After all, the newsreels exhibited at the cinemas retain their interest even when handicapped by a time-lag of more than a week.

In all humility I suggest that the troubles of "News and Newsreel" are caused by misplaced enthusiasm and a misconceived notion of the function of the service. Mr. Tahu Hole tries too hard.

He wants television's newsreel to be the equal, at least, of the sound "News"; he wants it to be complete, comprehensive. So whenever motion pictures are impossible he gives us "stills" of murky indecision, whenever topicality is to be obtained cheaply he gives us tedious airport interviews with migrant personalities, and whenever the news deals in ideas he gives us hurried, spatchcock and generally inadequate studio commentaries by "special correspondents." The results are dismal in the extreme. The

"stills" merely arrest the processes of thought: we see a picture of, say, the evacuation of some Chinese island and as we peer into the frozen charade the commentary sails clean over our heads. (It's an odd thing that the mind cannot suddenly adapt itself to sound and static picture from sound *plus* movie.) We stare—with the airport interviewer—at some poor politician and hear him say that yes, he is going to Paris to see M. Lenouveau and that he *does* hope to achieve ideological conformity, to put the British case (whatever that might be) or hear the French case. The politician cases himself out of vision and roars away into the sky, and two or three days later we hear him again, telling our balefully glaring airport

interviewer that he has achieved ideological conformity, put the British case or heard the French.

As for the studio commentaries on the hot news of the day, well, I can only say that I much prefer to await the considered judgment of the morrow's leading articles. I am not impressed by speakers who have had insufficient time to prepare their statements, and who have one eye (and one finger) on a script only just out of vision. By all means let us have commentators, but let them appear in TV's "late night final" with all the authority that adequate rehearsal and professional confidence can muster.

If "News and Newsreel" cannot thrive without the sense of mission implicit in its frantic attempts at topicality, I suggest that it takes a leaf or two from that unpretentious little programme "Facts and Figures" and interlards its stills, airport interviews and studio commentaries with animated diagrams. They would at least be animated. BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



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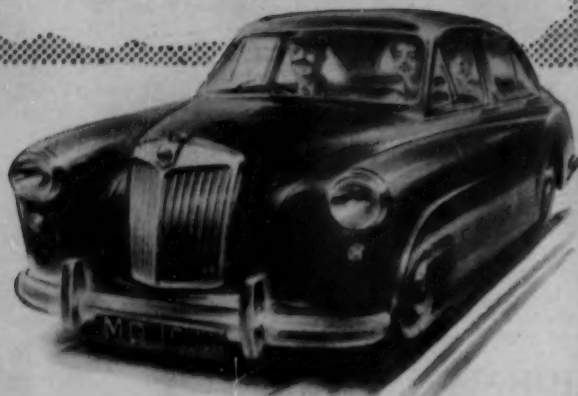
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EAGLES THROUGH THE AGES



THE Arms illustrated are those of the Borough of Wimbledon. The double-headed eagle is symbolical of Julius Caesar and of the battle fought by him on Wimbledon Common. Signifying the Crown association with Wimbledon is the golden rose (an old royal badge). From the Arms of Lord Spencer, the present Lord of the Manor, comes the golden fret, while the gold and azure border of the shield is from the Arms of the Earls of Surrey. The garb is from the Arms of the Cecil family, one of whom was Lord Wimbledon. The Cornish choughs are from the Arms of

Thomas Cromwell, a former Lord of the Manor. "Sine Labe Decus" — the motto — means "Honour without Blemish". The heraldic description reads: "Argent a double-headed eagle displayed Sable armed and legged Gules on the dexter wing a rose and on the sinister a fret Or a bordure compony Or and Azure and for the Crest issuant from a mural crown a garb supported on either side by a Cornish chough all proper."

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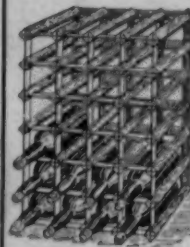
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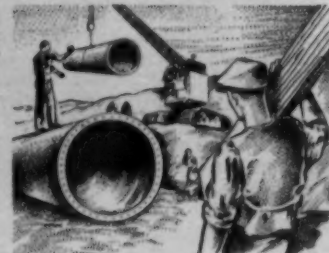
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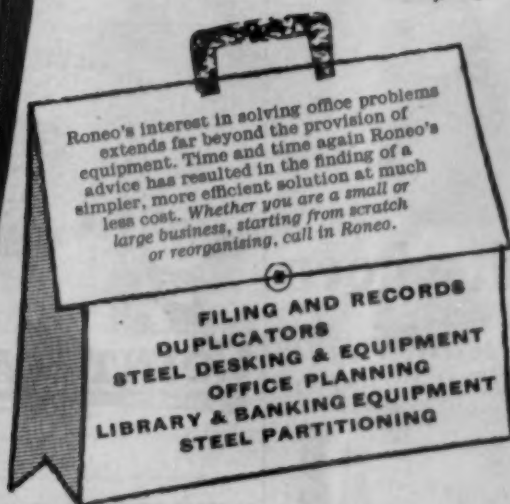
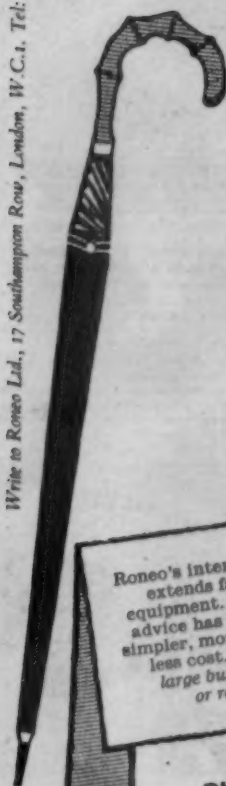
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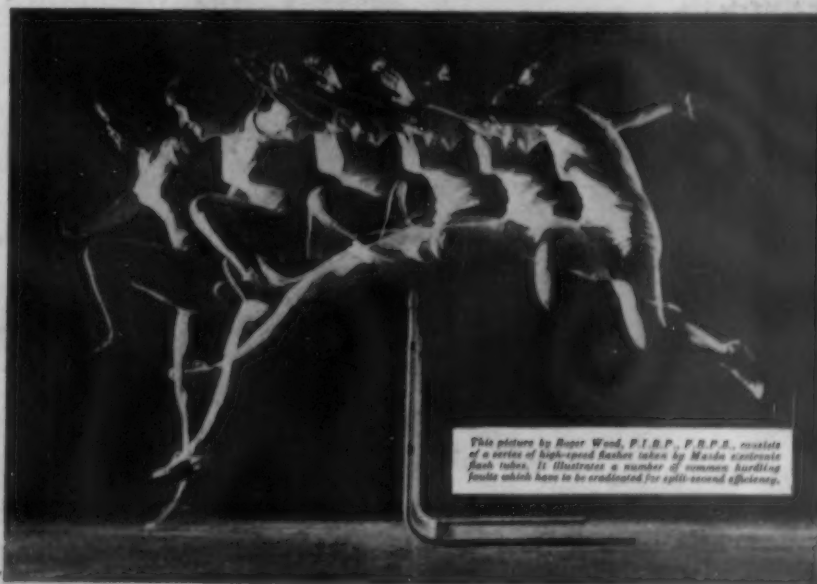
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This picture by Roger Ward, F.I.B.P., F.R.P.E., consists of a series of high-speed flashes taken by Mazda condenser flash tubes. It illustrates a number of common hurdling faults which have to be eradicated for split-second efficiency.

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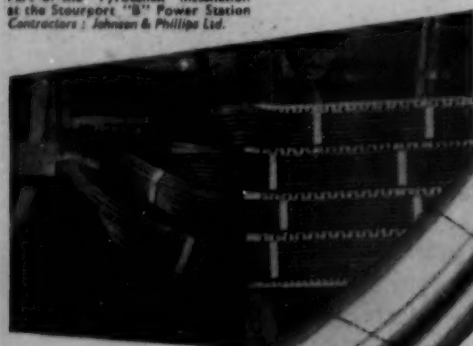
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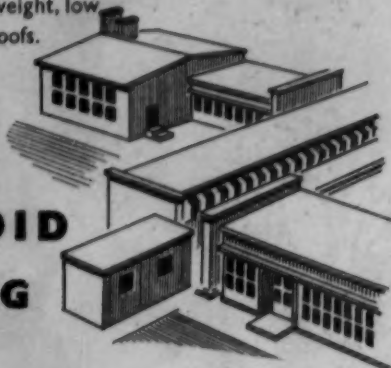
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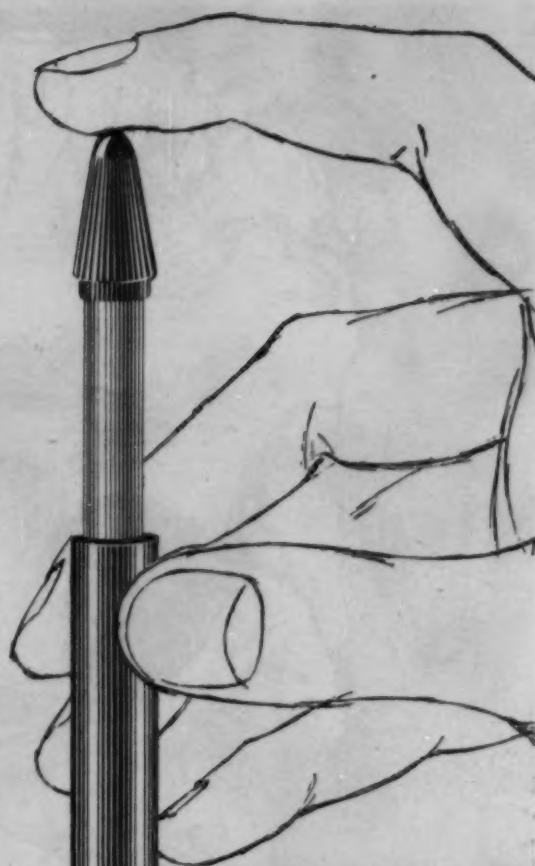


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